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THE EIGHTEENTH DECISIVE BATTLE OF THE WORLD

WARSAW, 1920

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THE EIGHTEENTH DECISIVE BATTLE OF THE WORLD

WARSAW, 1920

BY
VISCOUNT D'ABERNON

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THE EIGHTEENTH DECISIVE BATTLE OF THE WORLD

ACCORDING to the Creasy computation, there were fifteen decisive battles of the world before 1851. Since that date, two battles, viz. Sedan and the Marne, would, by general consent, be entitled to rank on the required plane of importance. While neither of these brought conclusion to a campaign, and while neither was a contest between opposing civilisations, both may be held to rank as World events, through the profound influence they exercised on the political situation in Europe.

The suggestion made in the present volume is that, in 1920, a battle of equal importance to the human race was fought and won ; a battle not less decisive than Sedan and the Marne in its influence on the culture of the world, on its science, religion and political development.

The decision as to what should be included in a list of World events, such as that established by Creasy, must be arbitrary ; the selection will necessarily remain a legitimate subject of discussion and

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controversy. On this point I am disposed to hold with the most impartial of historians, Hallam, that the determining factor and final criterion should be whether a contrary event would have essentially varied the drama of the world.

It cannot be disputed that "Warsaw, 1920" had many of the characteristics required for inclusion in such a category of greater magnitude. The civilisations in conflict were radically different, the objectives and methods of the combatants were violently opposed; it was in no sense an inter-tribal squabble, but rather a trial of arms between two fundamentally divergent systems. Moreover, an immediate and, so far, an enduring Peace, was the result.

It will be for the reader to judge, after perusal of the following pages, whether the claim of Warsaw is well founded. I have endeavoured to set forth the facts and to narrate events with simplicity, avoiding emphasis and undue bias.

GIBBON wrote, in a tone which some have taken for regret: "If Charles Martel had not checked the Saracen conquest at the Battle of Tours the interpretation of the Koran would be taught at the schools of Oxford, and her pupils might demonstrate to a

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circumcised people the sanctity and truth of the revelation of Mahomet."

The Battle of Tours was fought in A.D. 732. Language as strong would not be inappropriate to the events of 1920. Had Pilsudski and Weygand failed to arrest the triumphant advance of the Soviet Army at the Battle of Warsaw, not only would Christianity have experienced a disastrous reverse, but the very existence of Western civilisation would have been imperilled. The Battle of Tours saved our ancestors of Britain and our neighbours of Gaul from the yoke of the Koran ; it is probable that the Battle of Warsaw preserved Central and parts of Western Europe from a more subversive danger—the fanatical tyranny of the Soviet.

The victory of Charles Martel has been termed one of those signal deliverances which affect for centuries the happiness of mankind. The Polish victory of August 1920 has an equal, in some ways, perhaps, a superior, title to honour. For the civilisation endangered was of a far higher order ; compared with it, the century of Charles Martel was barbarous. In 1920 the set-back entailed by defeat would have been incomparably graver. While the hosts of Abd-er-Rahman were inspired by fierce religious zeal, they had an ordered state and

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enjoyed a high degree of culture. The enemies of the Poles had no ambition but to set class against class, no creed but destruction of the existent order, no policy but to annihilate all that stands for our conception of religion, justice and good faith.

Other historical comparisons are not less instructive. The struggle between East and West has continued through two thousand years. The dividing-line between the civilisations of Asia and Europe is usually fixed at Suez. Historical reasons plead rather for establishing the essential division at the 20th Meridian east of Greenwich. For it is on that meridian, or in close proximity to it, that the most decisive battles between the two civilisations have been contested. The most famous of these, Marathon and Salamis, are indeed recognised as turning-points in world history. Had the god of battle determined the issue in those days in favour of the hosts of the Persian King, there would have been little Greek culture or civilisation—the Greek spirit of individual freedom would have been crushed under Oriental despotism. Greek intellectual curiosity would have been stifled under Asiatic immobility—Europe would have lacked the primary source of her literary and artistic inspiration.

Lepanto was hardly less decisive. Had the Turkish

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fleet prevailed over the combined forces of Christendom, Europe might well have been overrun by barbarous hordes from Asia Minor and reduced to the sterile nakedness of all lands which fell under the devastating rule of the Ottoman Sultans.

In 1684 the Ottoman invasion made its furthest advance west. The Battle of Vienna was one of the occasions when Europe owed safety to Polish valour. Already at Chocim in 1280 Polish arms attained an important victory over Asiatic assailants, but the danger was even more grave before the walls of Vienna, and John Sobieski earned the gratitude of all who value the maintenance of European civilisation. It is difficult to estimate the relative importance of these events in the tenth and seventeenth centuries as compared with the Battle of Warsaw in our own time, but the surmise is justifiable that in its influence on the civilisation of Europe the victory before the walls of Warsaw in 1920 was no less vital than the historical contests in which Poland in earlier years acted as a bulwark to the west.

On the essential point there is little room for doubt; had the Soviet forces overcome Polish resistance and captured Warsaw, Bolshevism would have spread throughout Central Europe, and might well have penetrated the whole continent. In every

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large city of Germany, secret preparation had been made by Communist agents—a definite programme had been prepared—leaders had been chosen—lists of victims had been drawn up—undermining intrigue would have been followed by ruthless assassination and murder.

There is abundant evidence that the Moscow Government, in concentrating their forces upon Poland, had views extending far beyond the capture of Warsaw. Their ambition—their confident expectation of victory—extended to the countries west of the Vistula and beyond the Polish frontier.

The circumstances were peculiarly favourable to revolution. The minds of men were so weakened by the terrific strain of the years of war, that they had become a ready prey to any subversive doctrine. The old order, which had landed the world in so grave a catastrophe, had lost authority—something different must be resorted to. Bolshevism had not yet proved its incapacity—it was still a gospel of hope.

To set against the propagandist zeal of the Bolsheviks, there was, on the side of Western European civilisation, nothing but a divided camp. The Great War had imbued nations, notably France and Germany, with so bitter a mutual hatred that joint action between them was outside the pale of possibility.

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The foundations of Western civilisation might be menaced; ex-enemies could not combine in its defence; distrust made them oblivious of their common beliefs—suspicion and hatred were their counsellors. Diplomacy was, as yet, powerless to bridge the gulf.

Among the working-classes, political opinion was animated rather by sympathy for the Soviet doctrine than by aversion. Moscow propaganda had worked with persistence; large sections of the population were contaminated. Even among the classes hostile to fundamental change there was no adequate grasp of the appalling danger to civilisation which threatened. The Russian upheaval was regarded as an historical event similar to the French Revolution of 1789, destined infallibly and at no distant date to end in a return to imperial or bourgeois rule. The fanatical zeal which Communism inculcates and inspires was not understood by any save those who had come into close contact with it, nor was the fact appreciated that an avowed and organised attempt to set class against class had been initiated by propagandists in Moscow.

Apart from the dire peril which it warded off, there is a second reason which imparts interest and attraction to the Battle of Warsaw. In few other campaigns have the great principles of strategy been brought into such clear relief as in the battle which was fought in

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the central districts of Poland in August 1920. It was not a question of confused fighting without appreciable advantage to one side or the other. No painful inch was gained or lost in the swaying of uncertain combat: no forlorn hope, no desperate resistance. Daring strategy determined the fate of the forces immediately engaged and sealed at one stroke the issue of the whole campaign.

A subsidiary circumstance of unquestionable interest to the technical student is the fact that each of the Commanders-in-Chief has written a full account of his thoughts and actions both before and during the battle, together with his reflections after the event. Moreover, one of them has written a criticism of the actions of his opponent with a frankness unprecedented in military history. There is thus full material for the examination of rival theories and their execution.

A further reason may be adduced which renders the study of this historical episode a subject of exceptional interest for military readers. This is the clear deduction to be drawn from the events of August 1920. We now know that a situation can hardly be so compromised as to be beyond remedy if strategical genius is allowed fair scope. Since the situation in which the Polish forces stood on the 12th August could be converted into a Polish victory by the 20th August,

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what reason is there to despair in any conceivable situation? Nothing could appear more certain than that the Soviet forces would capture Warsaw either by direct attack or by encirclement from the south. No doubt crossed the mind of the Russian Commander Toukhatchevsky that victory lay within his grasp. The Polish forces had been driven back for six continuous weeks at the average rate of ten miles a day, and their commanders had lost confidence in any possibility of recovery. Toukhatchevsky describes them as dispirited and disorganised. Pilsudski, in taking command of the forces that eventually achieved a brilliant victory, declared that he had never seen such a parcel of ill-equipped ragamuffins—many of them indeed had not even boots. Should it not be an inspiration to military commanders faced with probable defeat to remember that in circumstances more perilous and less hopeful than their own a resounding victory was attained?

Before entering upon the narrative of events which preceded the supreme days around Warsaw, I should perhaps explain how I was brought into this theatre of action. In the month of June 1920 I was appointed His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin. After presenting my letters of credence I

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was summoned to the Spa Conference, having spent only four or five days in Berlin. At Spa great apprehension was felt by the representatives of the Allies at reports of Polish disasters on the Russian frontier followed by a precipitate retreat. The Polish Government applied for assistance both to Paris and London ; Grabsky, the Polish Minister of Finance, who was present at Spa, urged in impassioned terms the necessity for immediate support. It was soon agreed between Mr. Lloyd George and the French Prime Minister that the best method of assistance was not only to despatch munitions to Warsaw but to send an Anglo-French Mission composed of diplomatic and military elements.

On our return to London from Spa the Prime Minister requested me to undertake this mission on the diplomatic side, General Radcliffe being the English military delegate. Before starting for Warsaw via Paris, Mr. Lloyd George agreed, on my urgent request, to allow Sir Maurice Hankey, Secretary to the Cabinet, to join the Mission. We left London on the 20th July for Paris, the French Government having indicated its agreement with the despatch of the Mission, but not having yet named its representatives.

The following were the terms of the official decision :

" That Lord D'Abernon (the British Ambassador

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GENERAL WEYGAND

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in Berlin), accompanied by a Military Officer to be nominated by the Army Council, should be invited to proceed to Poland, in conjunction with a similar French Mission, as a Special Envoy to advise His Majesty's Government as to the measures to be taken with the Polish and other Governments on questions arising out of the negotiations with regard to the conclusion of an armistice between Poland and Soviet Russia."

Apart from advising the two Governments on questions of negotiation, it was clearly understood that we had to assist the Polish Government in defending their country from the menace of attack. It was indeed obvious that if Warsaw fell there could be no successful negotiation.

Immediately on our arrival in Paris, we were received by M. Millerand, who at once agreed to lend whole-hearted co-operation to the Mission. He nominated General Weygand as the Military Member, and later in the day appointed M. Jusserand, the French Ambassador in Washington, as the civilian representative on the Mission, adding M. Vignon, his own *Chef Adjoint de Cabinet.*

NOTE.—*In the following pages diary alternates with commentary, the latter being distinguished by a closer spacing of type.*

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DIARY

Paris, 22nd July, 1920.—Since arriving here, in addition to official interviews, we have conversed with a number of private individuals who are considered likely to throw light on the position at Warsaw. The most prominent of these is Paderewski, long one of the most distinguished pianists of Europe, and lately Prime Minister of Poland. If our impression of the position of Warsaw was dark before we discussed matters with this artistic genius, it was notably more gloomy after our interview. His main advice was that the Mission should on no account omit to be accompanied by aeroplanes. Ordinary prudence demanded that we should be provided with means to facilitate our escape in the almost certain event of the capture of Warsaw by the Soviet. Even allowing for the fact that this warning came from a political rival of those now in power at Warsaw, it proceeded from one who knew local conditions well, and was not conducive to confidence in the possible success of our Mission.

Prince Léon Radziwill, a Polish nobleman resident

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in Paris, who had distinguished himself with the Polish Legion during the War, was more reassuring. He held the view that it was not too late to organise a successful resistance to the Russian advance. His confidence in the position was such that he offered to come to Poland himself and to assist the Mission with his advice. This project he was not able to carry out, but the views he gave regarding Poland and regarding the whole situation in Central Europe were more correct and far-seeing than those received from any other source. His fundamental view was that the Czecho-Slovakians were essentially Slav, and would in the last resort fall in with the Russian programme, being infinitely closer to pan-Slavism than the Poles. It was therefore vain to look for assistance from them. From Germany there was even less chance of help. It was even doubtful whether the ordinary facilities of transport would be given.

In Special Train from Paris to Warsaw, 23rd July, 1920.—We have decided not to accept the advice of the ex-Polish Premier with regard to aeroplanes. But we have adopted the more practical plan of travelling in a special train and living on board in the station at Warsaw. We shall thus escape the

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publicity of noisy hotels and not burden our respective diplomatic representatives with a heavy charge of hospitality. This plan has the ancillary advantage of affording a ready means of withdrawal in case of need. The train arrangements have been admirably carried out by the French authorities, and all has gone fairly smoothly on our passage through Germany.

Prague, 24th July, 1920.—A fortunate accident to our locomotive has compelled a stoppage of four or five hours, which has been turned to advantage by my French colleague. As an old friend of President Masaryk he at once decided to seize the opportunity of an interview with the statesman enjoying the highest reputation for sagacity in Central Europe. We were thus able to gain an intimate knowledge of the Polish position as it appeared to the most competent advisers of a neighbouring state. If Paderewski had been gloomy in his views of the situation, the Czecho-Slovakian President was even more so. Not only did he consider the capture of Warsaw by the Bolshevik Army a matter of certainty but he warned us against organising any military assistance to the Poles on two grounds: it was certain to be completely ineffective in a military

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sense, and it was liable to destroy the authority of the Western Powers in the subsequent negotiations for peace. By openly siding with the Poles in their hopeless position we would do them no good and we should do ourselves much harm. Advice from so authoritative a quarter could not but make a certain impression on our minds, but no other course was open to us than to carry out the instructions we had received.

The interview with Masaryk was by far the most important event in our short stay in Prague. Conversations with other persons opened our eyes to the fact that in Central Europe Bolshevism enjoyed a large amount of sympathy throughout the working-classes. The popularity of Communism appears not to be affected either by the monstrous behaviour of the Bolsheviks and their outstanding cruelty, nor by the complete failure of their economic administration. The feeling is more akin to an instinctive religious bias than to a reasoned political opinion. Present conditions are bad. Bolshevism opens the door to complete change. Therefore it should be followed. We also saw evidence that when there is money for nothing else in Moscow there is money for propaganda, and great skill is shown in inoculating discontented classes with a new gospel of hope.

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Warsaw, 25th July, 1920.—We arrived in Warsaw this morning. The English and French Ministers accredited to the Polish Government met us at the station, together with a very small deputation from the Polish Ministry. The tone of the reception was civil, but hardly cordial and certainly not enthusiastic.

Driving through the town from the station to the British Legation my first impression was that of surprise at the normal aspect of the population. In the streets there was no sign of alarm or panic; no indication that the manhood of the country had been called upon for a supreme effort and was absent on military service. The proportion of the sexes appeared quite normal. The only abnormal feature was the extreme frequency of religious processions. We were held up by these at every street corner.

No time was lost in getting to work, and by ten o'clock the English members of the Mission were in close conference with three English general officers who had arrived from Berlin and Danzig.[1]

[1] These officers were: Major-Gen. Hon. Sir Francis Bingham, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., Chief of British Section of the Military Inter-Allied Commission for Control of Armaments; Major-Gen. Sir Neill Malcolm, K.C.B., D.S.O.; General Sir Richard Haking, G.B.E., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., High Commissioner of the League of Nations at Danzig.

The services rendered to the Mission by these officers were invaluable.

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The situation in which we found Poland on our arrival was one of extreme peril. The Bolshevik Army had advanced 300 miles from the Dwina after their first success in the beginning of July, and was still driving the Polish Army before it; or to speak more correctly the Bolsheviks were manœuvring the Polish Army back by infiltration, outflankings and turning movements. From the beginning of the retreat there had been no serious resistance. The Bolshevik forces were now only 100 miles from Warsaw, nor was there any physical obstacle to impede their further advance. The Polish Army, which in the month of June had brought off several successful attacks, was now discouraged and appeared incapable of serious resistance.

If it is impossible to avoid criticism of the fighting capacity of the Poles during the retreat from the Dwina to the Vistula, it is essential to remember that this army had been created in the early months of 1919 and was therefore only between a year and eighteen months old at the time of the events here narrated. It was recruited in the main from disconnected and opposed elements, who had been fighting during the Great War, not together, but against one another. It is on record that in the course of the Great War 700,000 Poles were mobilised in the Russian Army, 300,000 in the German and 300,000 in the Austrian Army. Further constituents of the Polish Army were legionaries and revolution-

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aries who had been fighting on one side or the other without any lasting affiliation. From such elements was it possible that a united or disciplined force could be improvised in the course of a few months? It has further to be remembered that the Polish leaders

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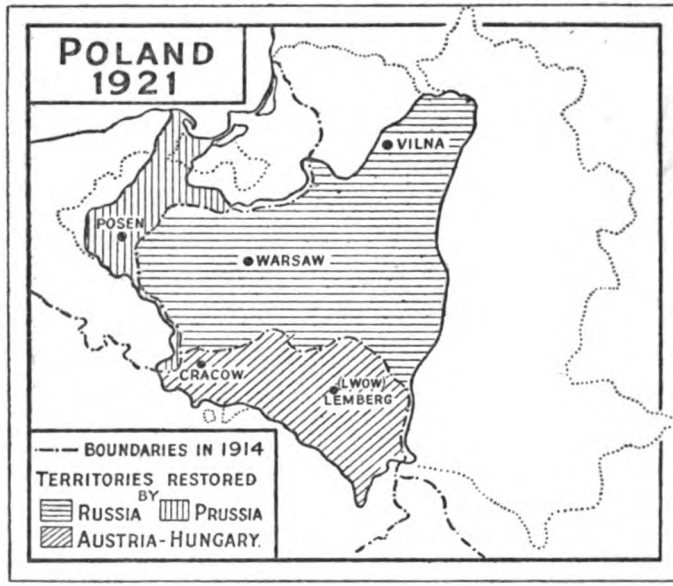

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POLISH TERRITORY PREVIOUS TO THE WAR.

had held during the War violently divergent views, some being animated by special fear and hatred of Germany, others again by special fear and hatred of Russia; a further large section was inspired by a special predilection for France. The previous history

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of Poland did not inspire confidence in the possibility of rapid organisation for concentrated effort. Poland,

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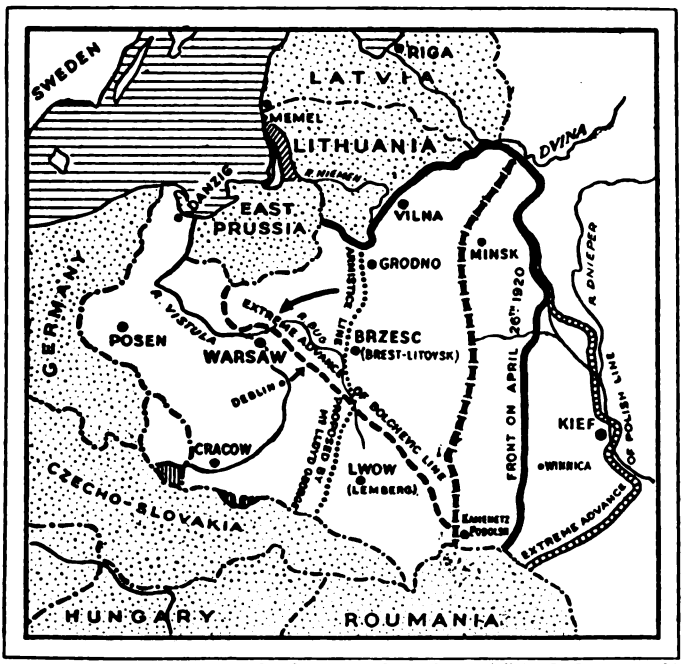

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POLISH FRONTIERS ON DIFFERENT DATES.

Warsaw = Varsovie.	Brest-Litovsk = Brzesc.
Posen = Posnan.	Vistula = Vistule.
Cracow = Cracovie.	Vilna = Wilno.
Lemberg = Lwow.	

the Niobe of nations, had not appeared on the map of Europe during the hundred years which preceded the Great War; the whole territory which formed

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the ancient kingdom of Poland, and which now forms the Polish Republic, having been divided for the fourth time in 1815 by the Treaty of Vienna and attributed to the three great Empires, Russia, Germany and Austria. During the hundred years since 1815 Poland was a patriotic aspiration—it was not a geographical area, nor was it an independent autonomous state. That the Polish Army under such conditions should have had any cohesion is a subject for surprise and admiration. (Map A on p. 24 shows the countries which now constitute the Polish State as divided between the three Empires. Map B on p. 25 shows the farthest extent of the Polish advance eastwards as well as the advance of the Russian troops between 1st July and 12th August, 1920. It also indicates the frontiers proposed at different times by various authorities.)

In the spring of 1920 the military authorities of Poland, taking advantage of the fact that the Russian forces were engaged in repelling attacks on three fronts by Wrangel, Denikin and Koltchak, pushed forward far beyond any line contemplated by the Powers and captured Kieff with the surrounding districts. The result of aggressive action was that the Poles were spread over a long line of 1,000 kilometres with insufficient forces: they were far from their base of supplies and had quite inadequate facilities of lateral communication along their front

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—no reserves and no power of concentration. The natural reaction was that as soon as the Moscow authorities had disposed of Koltchak and Denikin they determined not only to eject the Poles from what they considered Russian territory, but to capture Warsaw and export their doctrines beyond the Vistula. Trotsky, amid loud applause from the Communist Congress, formally proclaimed that he would destroy bourgeois Poland and carry the proletariat revolution far to the west.

It may be regarded as certain that from July 1920 all negotiations entered into by the Soviet under pretext that they were prepared to make peace with Poland were little more than a blind; they were designed with a view both to gain time for a military advance, and to give an opportunity for subversive propaganda in Poland to bear fruit. Among the erroneous ideas entertained by the Western Powers none was more dangerous than their belief that peace was possible with the Soviet. The Russian authorities were confident of their power to destroy the Polish Army and capture Warsaw. They would treat seriously after that had been done and not before.

The Polish Government, while less credulous than the Western Powers regarding the good faith of Soviet negotiators, made the grave mistake of estimating Russian military force in July 1920 as only equal to Russian military force a few months

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before. Earlier in the year Russia was engaged on other fronts, but in July the Russian force available for the attack on Poland had been strengthened not only by the troops set free by the termination of hostilities with Denikin, Wrangel and Koltchak, but by prisoners taken from these three armies—enrolled forcibly or willingly in the Soviet army. Military efficiency was moreover increased by large additions of *matériel* acquired in the interval. In July 1920 the Russian forces were both larger and better equipped than the Poles.

A further circumstance favoured the Russian advance. Moscow disposed of a host of spies, propagandists, secret emissaries and secret friends, who penetrated into Polish territory and undermined the resistance of certain elements of the Polish population. In the astounding advance during July 1920 when the Russian Army drove the Poles back over 400 miles in forty days the services rendered by the unarmed were not less effective than those brought about by military pressure. The system adopted was to avoid frontal attack whenever possible, and to turn positions by flank marches, infiltration and propaganda. In vain the Poles attempted to hold positions at various strategic points. In every case they were compelled to retire after a brief resistance, the chief result of ineffective fighting being increased demoralisation.

As the Russian Army advanced they were welcomed

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in many towns with friendliness by sections of the population attracted by their doctrines. If there was no general uprising favourable to them in the districts east and north of Warsaw this is possibly due to the fact that the population in these parts is mainly agricultural. A more dangerous welcome might have to be recorded had the Soviet forces reached the manufacturing districts.

Throughout Communistic circles in Europe, the initial success of the Bolsheviks had aroused immense excitement in the early days of August 1920. Little doubt was felt that Warsaw would fall before the middle of the month, and that this success would only be the prelude to the victory of Bolshevism in Prague and Berlin. The advanced Socialist parties both in France and England protested vigorously against assistance being given to the Poles in defence of their territory, either by the despatch of troops or supplies. The *Humanité* of 7th August declared : " Not a man, not a halfpenny—nothing for capitalistic Poland." In England, even sober political leaders—as was made clear in the House of Commons debate of 10th August—had only one preoccupation : to keep clear whether or not Warsaw fell and Communism triumphed.

The Second Congress of the Communist Third International which sat in Moscow from 19th July to 7th August, 1920, laid down in twenty-one points the conditions which it would impose upon the old

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world after its victory. It proclaimed the sovereign authority of the Third International and engaged to destroy all those who refused to recognise it. The democracies of the world must be subjugated, and all working-class fractions who remained outside the universal Communist party must be suppressed.

Meanwhile, the Bolshevik Commander, Toukhatchevsky, was so confident of victory that he paid little attention to the manœuvres and movements of the Polish forces opposed to him. That Warsaw would fall was a foregone conclusion: the only doubt was how far beyond Warsaw victory would carry him—how complete would be the disintegration of Poland—to what other countries would disintegration extend—what would be the world reverberation of the confidently expected victory.

While the political importance of battles is by no means to be measured by the numbers of the combatants, the reader will probably desire at this stage some estimate of the strength of the respective armies.

Various figures have been put forward both by Russian and Polish authorities professing to give the number of combatants on each side during the 1920 campaign. But the data are so uncertain and the bias of compilers so obvious that no confidence can be felt in any precise figure. On a review of the various authorities available, I incline to the opinion that the bayonet and sabre strength was approximately

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equal, being in the neighbourhood of 150,000 in each army. At the commencement of operations on 1st July, the Soviet force was probably the stronger, but as they advanced west their numbers dwindled, whereas recruits joined the Polish Army, particularly after the retreat had reached Poland proper. It seems possible that on 1st July the Russian fighting force exceeded the Polish force by some 30,000 men, while the Poles exceeded the Russians by a similar number between the 13th and 20th August.

The total number of Russian soldiers captured by the Poles amounted to 66,000, while the number who were driven over the Prussian frontier and there disarmed is estimated at 44,000. Regarding the killed and wounded, no reliable estimate has been formed of the Russian losses. The Polish losses are given as 50,000 killed and wounded during the whole course of the operations of 1920.

Warsaw, 25th July, 1920.—This afternoon, together with Jusserand, I called on Prince Sapieha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and introduced the Mission. Sapieha welcomed us with cordiality and set forth the position with great frankness and a complete absence of panic. He admitted that the Polish left was badly broken and that there were no reserves

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to prevent the Bolshevik advance from Grodno on Warsaw. On other fronts farther south the Polish forces were resisting better. Sapieha informed us that while negotiations are going on *re* an armistice his confidence in the success of these is shaken by a Russian telegram the Poles intercepted yesterday ordering a general attack. The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs gave me the impression of sincerely desiring peace, the non-conciliatory spirit which is thought in some quarters to animate the Polish Government being notably absent.

Later in the day I had an interview with the Chief of the State, Pilsudski, who said the greatest service the Mission could render Poland was to keep the communications through Danzig open. Poland was in urgent need of supplies. But this was not all. The importance of keeping the road open was not only material but moral. He attached more importance to supplies than to military assistance in the form either of advice or foreign officers.

Warsaw, 26th July, 1920.—Since arrival here yesterday, the English members of the Mission have spent much time in conference with English general officers now stationed in Berlin and Danzig,

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who have been sent to inform us on the present position so far as it comes within their special competence. The advice they give is much to the point. It leads to the conclusion that the project of transferring German munitions of war to Poland is impracticable, as under the Treaty of Versailles these munitions have to be destroyed. They also advise that, even if this were practicable, the German railway workers would refuse to handle the goods. It would also be useless to press for increased facilities in the transmission of arms destined to supplement Polish supplies. The only practical course is to keep the Danzig route open, and on this I decided to concentrate. If it is achieved, Polish necessities can be met. General Haking, who is commanding the troops at Danzig, is confident that if he is given a free hand he can solve the unloading difficulty at that port. Firmness is requisite, but with firmness success can be attained. If necessary English soldiers might be employed to get the goods unloaded.

In the afternoon of yesterday Jusserand and I had an interview with Grabsky, the able Minister of Finance, and found him far from satisfied with the action that is being taken by the Polish Government. We drew his attention to the apparent failure on the part of the military authorities to take advantage of

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General Weygand's presence. I was particularly insistent on the immense value to Poland of Weygand's unrivalled experience and of his capacity for military organisation. To this Grabsky did not say much, but it appeared from the conversation, and it has been confirmed from other sources, that Marshal Pilsudski, the Head of the State and Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army, is opposed to deferring to Weygand ; he holds that warfare in the East is quite different from warfare in Flanders ; the kind of experience which might be required would be that of an English colonial general. Whether there is much in this criticism may be doubted, but Pilsudski has immense authority here and a greater knowledge of local conditions than anybody. Apart from the reasons openly stated there is doubtless in the minds of many Polish military leaders a prejudice against foreign officers. They do not want their own powers curtailed, and fear lest any prestige which may accrue should go to others. Moreover, there is the language difficulty, which has a very real importance.

In the evening we dined with Prince Sapieha at the Club des Chasseurs to meet the Ministers. While they were reticent and discreet, it is clear that they are convinced of the desirability of using Weygand, but

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they cannot overcome the resistance of the Head of the State, Pilsudski.

I continue to marvel at the absence of panic, at the apparent absence indeed of any anxiety. The advanced line of the Bolsheviks is not more than 100 miles distant from Warsaw. Were a methodical system of defence being organised by the Polish Government against attack from the north the confidence of the public might be understood, but so far from this being the case all their best troops are being sent to the south to defend Lwow (Lemberg), leaving Warsaw unprotected. In the north they have a sick general in command who admits that he has lost his nerve, and declares openly for an immediate peace.

This diversion of the best troops to the south is sometimes explained by the rumour that intercepted messages between Russian commanders indicate that the main Russian attack will be on that front. I have no belief in the truth of this explanation. The best information regarding the Bolshevik Army does not describe it as either enthusiastic or efficient. Its superiority consists in the officers, and in the fact that they have had longer experience of working together than the Poles. The stories about German ex-officers occupying important posts are denied.

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The Russians have neither many aeroplanes nor heavy artillery, but they are better equipped with machine guns than the Poles.

Warsaw, 27th July, 1920.—A further meeting with the English generals this morning. No explanation was forthcoming of the apparent absence of proper measures of defence against attack from the north, nor was there any further indication that the Polish Government are inclined to utilise to the full the services of General Weygand. I talked matters over with Jusserand and suggested that we should press the Polish authorities to sink their susceptibilities and take advantage of the presence here of so distinguished a commander. Jusserand, however, urged that it would be better to wait twenty-four hours, his reason being that Weygand himself is anxious not to have anything done which would be offensive to Général Henrys. This officer is the head of the resident French Military Mission, and was until our arrival the adviser to the Polish Government on military matters. Personally I am not disposed to stand on ceremony with so grave a crisis threatening. Henrys has been here some time and has evidently failed to make good his authority and prestige with

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the Polish Government. He is said to be completely dominated by Pilsudski, while the French Mission as a whole has not attained a success in any way comparable with French achievement in other countries. Général Henrys is said to have encouraged the rash Polish advance in the Spring of 1920, and now finds all sorts of futile excuses for what has turned out to be a disastrous move.

The more I see of Weygand, the more I am impressed by him—calm, clear, precise.

At 3 p.m. to-day a telegram arrived from London announcing that the Soviet Government was ready to negotiate a favourable armistice with Poland. This news came as a surprise here and is not generally credited. The expectation has been that the Soviet would drag on armistice negotiations while their troops advanced. When it came to signing, the demands would be so excessive as to be inacceptable. However this may be, it appears essential as far as the Mission is concerned not to allow any rumour of negotiation to diminish activity in organising defence. One cannot but be struck here with the apparent want of methodical resolution both on the civil and military side. Even more remarkable is the outstanding *insouciance* of everybody while the enemy is at the gates of the capital. The Prime Minister,

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a peasant proprietor, has gone off to-day to get his harvest in. Nobody thinks this extraordinary.

Warsaw, 27*th July*, 1920 (*later*).—Unless an armistice is concluded within a few days it will be necessary to evacuate Warsaw and form a new base either at Posen or Cracow. My strong view is in favour of Posen, on account of its proximity to Danzig and the greater facility for maintaining communication with the sea. Weygand and Radcliffe are telegraphing to Paris and London urging the despatch via Danzig of the *matériel* required by the Polish Army. The present supplies are very defective. They require signalling apparatus, arms and ammunition, and even more urgently they require aeroplanes.

Warsaw, 28*th July*, 1920.—The dominant personality here is unquestionably Marshal Pilsudski, Head of the State and Commander-in-Chief of the Army. An astounding career: seven years in Siberia, and a good many months on other occasions in various Russian prisons. An ardent patriot and a man of immense courage and force of character.

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A pronounced sceptic about orthodox methods, whether applied to military affairs or politics ; he loves danger, his pulse only beating at a normal rate when he is in imminent personal peril—at other times at forty to the minute. In appearance so striking as to be almost theatrical. None of the usual amenities of civilised intercourse but all the apparatus of sombre genius. He claims that in actual fighting his methods, though unusual and not in conformity with textbook practice, have invariably proved successful.

Next to danger, he is said to love intrigue—a revolutionary by temperament and circumstance, his ingrained proclivity is to the secret and the indirect. On the present occasion this will not facilitate the work of the Mission. To harmonise Weygand's tempered, orderly methods of organisation with the wild practice of a conspirator and an ex-leader of irregular levies, appears hardly possible.

The Polish Ministers who, theoretically, are supposed to advise him, possess in truth little real influence or authority. Indeed, he definitely prefers to act in opposition to their counsel.

It is noticeable that he has gained a complete ascendancy over the foreign military officers who have

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been brought into contact with him. Général Henrys is a devotee, and the head of the British Military Mission, General Carton de Wiart [1]—a man of marked independence of judgment—is fascinated by this strange Polish phenomenon.

If it is asked to what political party Pilsudski belongs the answer is somewhat difficult. In the early days he was accounted a Socialist and unquestionably had close relations with the Socialist leaders and others even more to the Left. Moreover, seven years of Siberia are sufficient to give any man a right of comradeship in advanced Socialism. But in November 1918, when he had already become head of the Polish State and his main object, if one of personal ambition, had been accomplished, he received a Socialist deputation who came to greet Comrade Pilsudski, in the following terms: "Gentlemen, I am no longer your comrade. In the beginning we followed the same direction, and took the tramway painted red, but I left it at the station—Poland's Independence; you are continuing the journey as far as the station—Socialism. My good wishes accompany you, but be so kind as to call me Sir."

[1] Major-General Adrian Carton de Wiart, V.C., C.M.G., D.S.O., the head of a British Military Mission which had been in Poland since the Armistice.

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MARSHAL PILSUDSKI

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The fact is that in each and all of the numerous parties which compose Polish political life Pilsudski has devoted friends and bitter enemies. No party as a whole is for him or against him, except indeed the National Democrats of the Right, who have been constantly adverse, and whose principal papers have continued to criticise and ridicule Pilsudski even when Head of the State.

It will be seen that it is difficult to classify Pilsudski among military leaders. Whose principles of strategy does he follow? To what school does he belong? In his book on the year 1920 he himself declares that he belongs to no school except to one which he calls that of open-air strategy—" la stratégie de plein air." The words are given in French in the Polish text. By this he means that his method is not that of employing great masses, for he did not possess them, nor is it the strategy of combined action, with troops in close formation, nor is it the strategy of trench warfare, for he constructed no trenches. He claims that his consistent series of victories has been obtained by methods in which the troops moved freely in large spaces, strategy in which " les loups, les coqs de bois, les élans, et les lièvres peuvent se mouvoir librement sans nuire à l'œuvre de guerre, à l'œuvre de la victoire."

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Warsaw, 27th July, 1920.—A satisfactory meeting took place this evening between the Anglo-French Mission and the Defence Committee of the Polish Cabinet.

The principal step decided upon was that General Weygand's services should be utilised to the full and that he should be assisted by General Radcliffe. It was thought preferable that Weygand should not be made titular Chief of the Staff, but that he should act as adviser to the Polish Chief of the Staff, with full access to all papers, orders, etc. It was understood and accepted by all present that his views would receive the fullest consideration.

The question of what generals to appoint to the commands in the field is one of unusual difficulty. The officer corps is divided into three sections—old Austrian officers, old Russian officers and officers with German training. The jealousy between these three sections is such as to render co-operation difficult. The Ministers assure us that efficiency will be the only guide in the appointments made. They go on to add that only one general has hitherto been excluded for private reasons, namely, General Dovbor, a man of recognised capacity, but a rival and enemy of Pilsudski. He is now at Posen and expected shortly at Warsaw.

My apprehension that the telegram from London

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stating that the Soviet had agreed to a London Conference would lead the Poles to relax war preparation was groundless. The leading men here attach no importance whatever to any Soviet acceptance of a London Conference, being convinced that the terms of any armistice that the Soviet proposed would be quite inacceptable. The French take the same view. The Polish Ministers expect that Soviet peace terms will involve : (1) reduction or disbandment of the Army ; (2) the establishment of some form of Soviet Government in Poland. Neither of these conditions would they agree to discuss. A third anticipated demand from the Soviet is the release of Communist prisoners in Poland. This appears to present less difficulty.

Warsaw, 29th July, 1920.—General Haking has displayed great energy at Danzig. He reports favourably regarding the possibility of sending supplies to Poland through that port. This news has greatly cheered the Polish Government and is warmly appreciated by the public here. The opinion is widely held that the mere fact of keeping the Danzig route open will have a determining influence on the armistice negotiations. Personally I am more than

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ever sceptical about the armistice. It is clear that the Russians are confident of capturing Warsaw. It is also clear that if Warsaw is captured Moscow can demand much better terms than they can put forward to-day. London appears to me too much inclined to believe in the possibility of an immediate arrangement with the Soviet Government. What would the Soviet gain thereby?

Warsaw, 30th July, 1920.—It has been raining here steadily for the last forty-eight hours, a somewhat favourable circumstance as it will delay the Russian advance, but the situation remains critical. General Radcliffe has just returned from the front near Bialystok. He found the morale of the Polish troops better than he expected, but the Russian cavalry, estimated at 8,000, continually outflanks the Polish left and the Poles continue to retreat.

Weygand finds great difficulty in inducing the Polish General Staff to devote enough troops to the northern front. They have an idea that the final frontier in Galicia will depend upon the line between the armies at the precise date of the armistice. It is therefore necessary to defend with energy all territory in the south. The frontier on the north will be

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determined on ethnographical lines. The precise position there on the day of the armistice is consequently less important. How far this is true may be doubtful. The practical result of holding it is that the Poles expose their heart at Warsaw while endeavouring to protect their feet in the south. The probability that Warsaw will have to be evacuated in a few days increases.

Warsaw, 31*st July*, 1920.—The Russians have advanced from Grodno, and are now half-way between that town and Warsaw. Moscow does not pay the smallest attention to the admonitions from London that any military advance throws doubt on their *bona fide* desire for peace.

A telegram from Danzig states that a Spartacist demonstration of some 8,000 people has taken place there to protest against taxation and to demand better food. The police eventually restored order, but this demonstration is an indication that Bolshevik propaganda is making converts in these parts. Demonstrations in other towns may be expected.

Warsaw, 31*st July*, 1920.—Sir Maurice Hankey left last night for London. He will report fully

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to the Cabinet on the position. It would be impossible to speak too highly of the assistance he has given. A man of excellent judgment with an untiring capacity for work.

Warsaw, 1st August, 1920.—We have now been here about a week, and I have been able to form a fairly clear impression of the position. It is not exhilarating. When we arrived, we found the Army thoroughly disorganised, with very inadequate supplies of *matériel*.

Not only was the Army insufficient in strength, but it was a wasting asset; there were numerous stragglers and deserters. The latter are estimated by some at as many as 100,000 out of a total nominal strength of 300,000, but there is no means of checking these figures. It appears, however, certain that up till recently the Provost-Marshal's Department has been extremely lax. Polish officers contrast undue leniency in this direction with Soviet severity, which has succeeded in rounding up vast numbers of recruits.

As regards the deficiency in military supplies in Poland, there was, when we arrived here, no route open by which these supplies could be obtained from France and England.

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Such was the situation. To-day, things still look critical though somewhat better. The Bolshevist Army has, indeed, made a further advance, but the Polish Army shows signs of organising for increased resistance. Energetic measures have been taken to collect stragglers and deserters. Officers who fail to do their duty are court-martialled without mercy, and the despatch of supplies to the front has been accelerated. The Allies may fairly claim that a considerable portion of the improvement is due to the arrival of the Franco-British Mission, particularly to the presence of General Weygand.

Even allowing in ample measure for the improvement achieved by the Poles themselves plus the effect of Weygand, the capacity of the Polish Army to make a stand against the vigorous advance by the Bolsheviks must not be exaggerated. The chances remain strongly against the possibility of holding Warsaw.

If Warsaw has to be evacuated, I have urged the Government to make a stand based on Posen and to fight on from there. Their original idea was rather to fall back on Cracow, but apart from the fact that the Posen population is tougher than that in the south, there is this dominant consideration—that Posen is much closer to Danzig and can be more easily supplied

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with provisions through Danzig, whereas it would be easy for the Bolsheviks to cut communications between Danzig and Cracow.

Against this argument, Polish Ministers are inclined to advocate a retirement on Cracow, believing that the Czecho-Slovaks are more friendly to them than the Germans. Personally, I do not attach much importance to this belief, for I am convinced that the Czech population, apart from its leaders, is more friendly to the Bolsheviks than to the Poles : the German Government, though assuredly not friendly to the Poles, distrusts Bolshevism.

The question of how to get munitions of war through to Poland from the west is one of immense difficulty. On the ground or on the pretext that they must maintain strict neutrality, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia and Germany have refused to allow trains laden with munitions to come through. This has been done partly because the workers themselves are of Communistic tendency and might refuse to allow the traffic to pass even if ordered to do so by their Governments. No one who has not been here can realise the extent to which sympathy with Bolsheviks dominates the working-classes in Central Europe. This sympathy is almost more religious than political. It is unaffected by ordinary considerations of interest

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and survives the complete failure of Bolshevik economic administration—no less than their admitted brutality and cruelty.

Warsaw, 2nd August, 1920.—The Soviet Army is filtering on through the country at a rapid rate. Frontal attacks are avoided everywhere. If a certain point is defended, Soviet troops and agents creep round it. The usual mode of approach to a town is to send a few skilful emissaries forward. These get in touch with the malcontents behind the Polish front, and so distrust and defeatism spread. The Soviet Army is not well organised or well furnished with supplies. But the country through which they are passing is prosperous, and if there is any lack they can quite well live on the land without drawing on the base.

The *insouciance* of the population here is beyond belief. One would imagine the country in no danger, and the Bolsheviks a thousand miles away. Weygand is not well supported by the Polish authorities. Their hearts are not much with him. But the imminence of peril may bring them round to give him support. The important fact is that the French officers are gradually getting to the front line, and that is a guarantee of success.

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Warsaw, 2nd August, 1920.—The situation is less hopeless than it was a week ago, and General Weygand may yet be able to pull the Army together. The greatest difficulty is to find capable generals and to secure their appointment when found. The hostility of the different schools to one another—Austrian, Russian, German—added to political animosities, makes the task of getting suitable commanders for the armies one of extreme complication.

In the matter of keeping the Danzig route open great progress has been achieved. General Haking has rendered valiant service. Apart from the material advantage gained there is considerable moral gain. The Poles felt that with the Danzig route closed they could be throttled by their powerful enemy from the east. The importance attached by the Russians to cutting communication between Warsaw and the sea is shown by the energetic advance of the Soviet right along the southern border of East Prussia. If they can capture Thorn and cut the railway between Danzig and Warsaw they will feel they have the Poles in their grasp.

Warsaw, 3rd August, 1920.—The Bolsheviks have captured Brest-Litovsk and have crossed the Bug

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below it. The retreating Polish troops omitted to destroy the bridges and the passage of the river was badly defended. Weygand appears to be less satisfied than he was regarding the attitude of the military leaders. They are unwilling to accept his advice and measures agreed upon are tardily executed. The Anglo-French Mission has demanded a meeting with the Cabinet Committee of Defence. We shall make a vigorous protest against the failure to take full advantage of Weygand's recommendations. Some positive agreement regarding future co-operation is indispensable.

The General Staff applied to me urgently to-day to expedite the disembarkation of rifles at Danzig. The present stock is exhausted. They express gratitude for the effective action already taken by us.

Warsaw, 3rd August, 1920.—Made an expedition yesterday along the Ostrow road to the north of Warsaw. This road is the main artery of communication between the capital and the north-eastern frontier. I therefore expected that it would be blocked with troops and munition waggons, also with refugees flying before the Bolsheviks. As a matter of fact there was very little traffic on it. We

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met one convoy of wounded, but I saw no troops marching north. In the villages some preparations were being made for defence but nothing of a very serious character. Curiously enough most of the people I saw who were engaged in putting up barbed wire and other forms of protection were Jews. This was surprising, as the Jews are suspected of being an element friendly to the Bolsheviks, but the feeling here between Christians and Jews is so strong, suspicion is so rife that it is difficult to ascertain the truth about anything. As an indication of the feeling between the Poles and Jews I may recount the following. Two private soldiers who were on the box of my car shook their fists as they passed Jews putting up wire entanglements, not that they objected to the work that they were doing, but merely as a normal expression of spontaneous antipathy.

I have already said that there was very little traffic on the road. In the course of 60 kilometres we passed less than a hundred refugees. Most of these came from Minsk and from other towns in White Russia, very few indeed from localities in Poland proper. Some of them told us that they had been driving their carts for ten or fourteen days in front of the Bolsheviks, keeping about 20 kilometres in advance. Many said that they were going to friends or relatives in the

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southern parts of Poland. It is probable that some at least were spies or advance agents of the Bolsheviks: they seemed too cheerful for genuine refugees.

The Polish peasants I talked to in the villages we passed through seemed to have made up their minds that the Bolsheviks would probably not come on, but that if they did it was not worth while shifting. The population here has seen so many invasions that it has ceased to pay attention to them. The general attitude of everybody is the easy view that the disagreeable will not happen, and if it is fated to happen there is no remedy. Therefore the wisest course is to do nothing.

It is impossible to obtain correct information here regarding the Bolshevik advance. The General Staff only admit the loss of a town forty-eight hours after it has fallen. The fort of Brest-Litovsk was captured the other day a few hours after Generals Radcliffe and Carton de Wiart had been there. While they were there no particular danger was apprehended, as no one knew the Russians were within striking distance.

So much has been written in military history of the line of the Bug that I expected a much more formidable obstacle than this river turned out to be. It has innumerable salients and re-entrants and is fordable in many places.

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Warsaw, 4th August, 1930.—The Polish Government is anxious that Jusserand and I should proceed to Paris and London to bring home to our Governments the extreme urgency of the situation and the necessity of increased military assistance. I telegraphed in this sense, but the Prime Minister is sure to decide that we are to remain in Warsaw until armistice negotiations have been concluded. That may be the Greek Kalends.

Warsaw, 4th August, 1920.—The Polish Delegation which was sent to Baranowicze did not find there any Soviet Delegation with whom serious discussion was possible.

We had a meeting with the War Committee of the Polish Cabinet last night, when the Ministers decided that they would not send delegates to Minsk until their representatives had returned from Baranowicze, and until they knew precisely what had occurred. Incidentally it was stated that the return of the Polish delegates to Warsaw had been impeded by Bolshevik forces at the frontier. It was also alleged that the road to Minsk, where a fresh meeting of delegates has been suggested, was almost impassable. They now regard the possibility of concluding an armistice

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with the Soviet as quite hopeless. They made a vigorous declaration of their determination to defend Warsaw to the last and to continue fighting even if they lost Warsaw.

Warsaw, 4th August, 1920 (*later*).—General Carton de Wiart is of opinion that the Bolshevik cavalry may possibly cut the railway communication between Warsaw and Posen and Warsaw and Danzig by Saturday night, the 7th inst., and this view is shared by the French authorities. The General therefore considered that by the 7th at latest everything should be evacuated from the Legation which cannot be transported by motor-car.

The Polish Government have not yet made up their mind to what town they will transfer the Government if Warsaw has to be evacuated. The present idea is to proceed to Chestochova, but the accommodation there is utterly insufficient and the town is already full of refugees from Eastern Galicia.

The Papal Nuncio,[1] as doyen of the Diplomatic Corps, has summoned a meeting of the heads of the different Legations for to-morrow, and it is pro-

[1] The Nuncio was no less a personage than Monsignor Achille Ratti, now Pope Pius XI.

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posed that the principal diplomatic representatives should call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and insist on a decision as to the place to which the Government proposes to move, and as to the date on which the move should be made. The Polish Ministers appear quite blind to the danger of Warsaw being surrounded.

Warsaw, 5th August, 1920.—We had a great meeting last night between the Franco-British Mission and the Council of National Defence. Sapieha again brought to our notice the suspicious attitude of the Soviet regarding armistice negotiations. He suggested that the Entente is being flouted and that the only fitting action would be a declaration of war by France and England against the Soviet Government. It was clear that the Soviet were merely gaining time until their advance on Warsaw had materialised.

The meeting then discussed the position of General Weygand. Jusserand's tone was moderate, but he claimed that all important information, whether good or bad, should be unreservedly communicated to Weygand. Secondly, that his advice on any military matter once accepted should be translated into action.

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In reply the Chief of the Staff paid a warm tribute to the assistance he had received from Weygand and Radcliffe, declaring that he had been co-operating cordially with them during the last few days. But the Polish Army was in a difficult situation: it had only recently come into being: its organisation had been improvised: it was deficient in training and experience: it lacked technical equipment. Moreover, the troops were exhausted after their long retreat. General Rozwadowski concluded by stating that the Polish General Staff accepted entire responsibility regarding the preparations, but they would be glad to receive Weygand's advice nevertheless. The attitude of the Chief of the Staff was so unsatisfactory that I pressed for a clear declaration from the Ministers to the effect that all information should be given to Weygand promptly, and that subsequently his advice should be followed. General Rozwadowski did not respond to this, repeating again what he had already said regarding the special conditions in Poland, adding that the Polish troops had peculiar qualities—defensive tactics invariably failed while the offensive succeeded: the Polish Army must attack.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs now intervened in the discussion, regretting that General Weygand

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should have had cause to think that his advice was not followed. As far as he could speak in the absence of the Chief of the State the matter would be put on a new basis. In any case he begged Weygand not to be discouraged but to carry on his work.

I then asked whether Prince Sapieha's statement might be taken as an official expression of the views of the whole Government. The Vice-President of the Council and the Minister of Defence both replied in the affirmative, but the Chief of the Staff remained recalcitrant, and declared that both he and the Chief of the State were convinced of the necessity of the offensive. The discussion continued for some time without any precise result, but the practical outcome will be an improvement in Weygand's position.

The meeting then discussed the question of the policy to be followed if it became necessary to evacuate Warsaw. Prince Sapieha said that no decision had yet been taken, but the choice lay between :

(1) Posen ;
(2) Chestochova ;
(3) Cracow.

As regards Posen this would be the most suitable from a strategical point of view as affording easiest

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communication with Danzig. On the other hand, its former association with Germany may be considered by some as constituting an objection. Chestochova was bound up with the most cherished traditions of Polish history and the Catholic religion. It was in the heart of a purely Polish territory and with the halo of national sentiment surrounding it would form a good rallying-point for the Polish people. Though not so well placed as Posen for communication with Danzig it was yet not too badly located.

Cracow was the ancient capital and a fortress, but might easily be severed completely from all communication with the Allies.

In conclusion the Vice-President of the Council requested the Franco-British Mission to point out to their respective Governments that the Russians were now invading the heart of Poland in flagrant contempt of all Notes presented by the Entente.

Warsaw, 5th August, 1920 (*evening*).—Jusserand and I have telegraphed home regarding the form which military assistance from France and England might take if the action of the Soviet Government in armistice negotiations renders military assistance to Poland necessary. We were unanimous that in

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no case should less than two Divisions be sent, together with two Cavalry Divisions and the administrative services necessary to make the force self-supporting. Should it prove impracticable to send an expeditionary force we suggest the occupation of Danzig by Franco-British troops.

Warsaw, 6th August, 1920.—As I anticipated the Home Government negative the Polish suggestion that Jusserand and I should proceed to Paris and London.

Warsaw, 6th August, 1920 (*evening*).—The Soviet Army continues to advance rapidly and is now within 30 miles of Warsaw. They have crossed every conceivable frontier, ethnographic or otherwise, and are well within Polish territory. The attitude of the Polish Government towards armistice negotiations does not justify this aggression. Ever since I have been here, 25th July, there has been a genuine and urgent desire for an armistice, and all possible expedition has been used in negotiating. Postponement of meetings has been entirely due to calculated delay on the Russian side.

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Warsaw, 7th August, 1920.—A Provisional Revolutionary Committee of Poland has been formed at Bialystok, which the Soviet forces recently captured. It has distributed the following leaflet:

"Let us march on Warsaw with a view to saving that which has not been destroyed by the Government of the squires. Every lost moment means the death of thousands from hunger. Up, comrades! Fulfil your duty! Let proletarians unite with proletarians against the exploiters."

The Polish Army is regrouping for the defence of Warsaw and has broken contact in many places with the three advancing Russian columns. This is a deliberate military move, and will, it is hoped, procure for the Polish Army a breathing space to recover morale. The rapid retirement need not be viewed with undue alarm. Right or wrong, there is a definite strategic plan. While the situation remains critical, Weygand is more hopeful than forty-eight hours ago. He says that the Poles are beginning to work more closely with him. But he complains of their unbusinesslike habits, of their incredible unpunctuality, and of messengers coming in and out of the room during a conference. Ever since the Mission has been here we have pointed out that the north was left unduly open, was defended by dispirited troops, and that it

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was the obvious danger to Warsaw. On the south they had all their best regiments—we therefore urged them to transfer from the south to the north. It is still doubtful how far they have followed this advice, sound as it appears to be. It would seem probable that they are either acting on secret information or that they have some hidden scheme.

The Poles have really quite a good strategical position, as they have interior lines with cross communication by railway, whereas the Bolsheviks are spread out with no reserves and very little cross railway communication—but all this is of no good unless morale can be revived. The main weakness proceeds from officers and high command. The assistance of French officers at the front is not always welcome. At Ostrolenka, on the north, two French officers sent up were very badly received by an incompetent general in command, who is stated to have seized their cars and sent them back on foot. If this story is confirmed the general deserves to be cashiered.

The Polish delegates who were appointed to negotiate with the Russians at Baranowicze are back in Warsaw. I had a conversation with one of them this morning. He describes the Russian officers as very much of the French Revolution

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1793 type, young, enthusiastic, with flaming eyes and long hair, but completely under civilian commissaires. Most of the commissaires are Jews, but not those who were sent to Baranowicze. The Poles esteemed it an act of courtesy that Christians were sent.

Weygand's view is that so long as the Soviets think they have a chance of taking Warsaw there is no hope whatever of an armistice. He seems to have the impression that the Russian invading force has very small reserves, that the troops are poor, but the officers and superior command good.

Private conversations with the Russians at Baranowicze gave no indication of what their terms to Poland would be, but they confirmed the view that there are two schools of thought in Russia, headed respectively by Lenin and Trotsky. The object of both is identical, viz. the widest extension of their propaganda. Lenin thinks this can best be carried out during peace; Trotsky holds that military prestige is a better advertisement. The Russians spoken to appeared confident in the success of their propaganda, which, they said, was so simple yet so effective that it could only be a question of time for the whole of Europe to succumb. My own view is that the Bolsheviks' military prestige has got to be destroyed

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and that there will be no change and no peace until this has been done.

I visited this afternoon the proposed new front in the direction of Minsk Mazowiecki. A treble entanglement of barbed wire is being put round Warsaw at a radius of about 20 kilometres, and a certain number of trenches have been dug for troops in support. There is a second line of barbed wire closer in to the city. The work has all been done in the course of the last fortnight and has been laid out under technical officers, but it did not appear to me to be well designed. The distance from the city is so small that if this second line is broken at any point nothing could stop the Russians from penetrating to the heart of Warsaw. On the other hand the small circumference gives a fairly numerous defence per yard—70 kilometres and 50,000 men—about 700 men per kilometre.

The road to Nowominsk was very crowded by refugees, mainly from the Brest-Litovsk and Biala districts. We met one party of prison warders from Biala, who frankly admitted that they had left their prisoners to look after themselves and had come away in a party. All prison warders did the same on the approach of the Bolsheviks. For the first people the Bolsheviks hanged or tortured were the police and prison warders.

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Warsaw, 8th August, 1920.—General Dovbor has decided not to accept the Southern Command. Dovbor has a high reputation as a military commander. He has hitherto been excluded from employment on account of his hostility to Pilsudski.

His reception by the Head of the State was not particularly cordial, for Pilsudski said: "We have never been able to work together. But public opinion demands that I should now offer you a high command. So I do so."

Dovbor, who was at Posen, endeavoured to arrange a secret interview with Weygand before arriving here, but Weygand avoided a meeting.

There is considerable suspicion that the Posen district has some idea of cutting adrift from Warsaw. The Posnanians consider themselves superior in military ability and in general efficiency to the rest of the Poles, and the truth is that in character they are quite different. The Posnanian regiments are reputed to be the best in the whole Army. Nothing is more certain in this part of the world than the immense prestige still enjoyed by Germany and the German Army. The War appears hardly to have diminished it; German training is held to be synonymous with efficiency. The high reputation of the Posnanian troops is due to the fact that they are more German than the rest.

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I have previously recorded the incredible indifference of the public here in the presence of a grave national danger. This has now given place in some sections to alarm. There is a body of opinion which holds that Warsaw ought not to be defended, indeed cannot be defended, and that the Poles should fall back farther west and try to reorganise. Weygand is opposed to this view and holds that if Polish troops will fight Warsaw ought not to be lost.

Warsaw, 9th August, 1920.—No two peoples have a stronger instinctive dislike for one another than Germans and Poles. The Poles credit the Germans with astounding military efficiency and infinite political guile. If the Germans had one-half the capacity for political intrigue with which the Poles credit them, they would have conquered the world long ago. On the other side, the Germans have quite an undue contempt for Polish ability, while some of them underrate the immense importance of Poland as a barrier against Russian advance. The French are so anti-German that it is difficult to frame any scheme in which they would co-operate to obtain German support against Communism, but it is obvious that if Germany goes Soviet the whole European position

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is compromised. Statesmanship has no more important task than to prevent Germany becoming communistic. A strong Poland would be an effective barrier. But national prejudice obscures vision.

Warsaw, 9th August, 1920.—It is now a week since Hankey left. I cannot say that the position has improved in the interval. The Russian advance has proceeded less rapidly than I anticipated, but the probability of a Polish defeat is undiminished. To a precise and methodical mind the slackness and want of method here are almost unbearable. Everyone turns up at meetings an hour or two late, and when at last a conference is started, interruptions occur incessantly—messengers coming in and out on the most trivial matters.

Weygand has gained in influence. The Government asked him to-day to take over the duties of Chief of the Staff. He does not wish to have responsibility without real power. Pilsudski insists on retaining the supreme authority, but appears now less disinclined to utilise Weygand's services than he was ten days ago.

Warsaw, 10th August, 1920.—The Polish Government yesterday offered Weygand the post of Chief

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of the Staff with very extended powers. He has telegraphed to Paris for instructions.

Warsaw, 10*th August*, 1920.—A vigorous telegram has been received from London to the following effect :

The French and British Governments make the following declaration to the Polish Government.

They consider that at forthcoming negotiations at Minsk Polish Government should do its utmost to conclude an armistice, and if necessary preliminary peace on terms which will secure independence of Poland within its ethnographical frontier.

If, however, the Russian Soviet Government insist on terms which infringe legitimate independence of Poland and Polish Government rejects them, French and British Governments will :

1. Take all the steps they can to interrupt contact between Russia and the outside world and put pressure on Russia by other means to respect independence of Poland ;

2. Supply Polish Army with military material for twenty-two Divisions and military advice, but they cannot in any circumstances send Allied troops over and above missions already there ;

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3. Do their utmost to keep open communication between Poland and Allies.

On the other hand, provided that Poland—

1. Makes a public declaration that it is its intention to fight to the end for its independence against Soviet attacks;

2. Appoints Commander-in-Chief who shall have no other functions and will accept effective assistance of Allied officers;

3. Will accept and act on military advice tendered by Allies;

4. Maintain Polish Army at strength of twenty-two Divisions completed as far as possible to their normal effectives;

5. Defend at all costs line of the Vistula in case the line held at this moment by Polish armies cannot be maintained.

This communication from the West was cordially received by Polish Ministers. The only point on which they find any difficulty is that respecting the Army command. Weygand's view is that the Bolsheviks evidently intend to make their assault on Warsaw on 12th or 13th August, so that any change in the Supreme Command at this moment might be dangerous. Moreover, Weygand's appointment as Chief of the Staff, which is contemplated and only

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awaits authority from Paris, would achieve a similar result in a less violent form.

Warsaw, 11th August, 1920.—A disagreeable surprise occurred to-day. The news came from London that Kameneff[1] had handed the British Government the terms to be offered to the Polish Government at Minsk to-morrow. These terms are :

1. Strength of Polish Army shall be reduced to one annual contingent up to 50,000 men and command and administration of Army to aggregate 10,000 men.

2. Demobilisation shall take place within one month.

3. All arms over and above such as may be required for needs of Army as reduced above as well as of civic militia shall be handed over to Soviet Russia and Ukraine.

4. All war industries shall be demobilised.

5. No troops or war material shall be allowed to come from abroad.

6. Line Volkovisk-Bielostock-Crajevo shall be fully at disposal of Russia for commercial transit from and to Baltic.

[1] Kameneff was the Soviet Agent in London.

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7. Dependents of all Polish citizens killed and wounded or incapacitated in the war shall be given lands free.

On the other hand:

1. (Group omitted) with demobilisation Russian and Ukranian troops shall withdraw from Polish front.

2. Upon termination of these operations number of Russian (? front-line troops) shall be considerably reduced and fixed at a figure to be agreed on.

3. Armistice line shall be status quo but no further east than one indicated in Note of Lord Curzon of 20th July. Polish Army shall withdraw to a distance of 5 (? versts) from that line, zone between the two lines being neutral.

4. Final frontier of independent State of Poland shall in main be identical with line indicated in Note of Lord Curzon of 20th July, but additional territory shall be given to Poland on the east in region of Bielostock Kholm.

These terms were so extravagant that I cannot conceive any Polish Government taking them into consideration. I should have expected London to have refused them without further parley. Several passages in the telegram were indecipherable, so that no full communication of the text could be made to the Poles. The view we all take here is that to accept

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terms of this nature would amount to a disastrous capitulation.

Rumbold keeps a cool head under these difficult circumstances, and must have had a disagreeable task in making his communication to the Polish Government. He has fortunately an excellent personal position here, and is regarded by the Poles as a sincere friend to their country. It may be that the net result of the episode will not be unfavourable. For the proposed armistice terms are so humiliating that they are in themselves sufficient to prove that safety is only to be found in fighting to the last. They slam the door on compromise and negotiation.

Warsaw, 11*th August*, 1920.—I have just written to Hankey on the importance of obtaining German co-operation against the Soviet. News from Paris is to the effect that the German diplomatic representatives there are constantly fishing for an invitation from the Entente to use German military force against the Soviet. It was quite certain that the French Government and M. Millerand would decline any such overture. But I am not sure that a blunt negative is wise or requisite. If a good bargain could be made with the Germans I should vote for it.

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But I am sceptical about the truth of the information. The really important point is that the whole of Central Europe should combine to resist Bolshevism and that no country should be in open or veiled co-operation with Moscow.

It is commonly believed in the West that the Soviet military power is much more considerable than it really is and that no military success against them is attainable. This I believe to be a false estimate. I go further and hold that a crushing defeat of the Bolshevik Army is not only the most desirable event which could happen but is an indispensable condition to any real peace with the Bolsheviks. If without inflicting a military defeat we patch up some kind of trade arrangement with Moscow the value of any engagements taken by them will be nil. No agreement will be worth the paper on which it is written. A striking military success is an indispensable preliminary to serious negotiation. Unless their military prestige is shattered their propaganda will undermine the position in many countries of Central Europe.

Warsaw, 12th August, 1920.—The telegram from London yesterday which transmitted the terms on

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which the Bolsheviks were ready to conclude peace fell like a bombshell here. Previous news both from London and Paris had convinced the Poles that they would obtain full support from the West unless reasonable terms were offered with genuine security for execution. No one thought then that the Bolsheviks would have the audacity to propose the disbandment of the Polish Army or its reduction to an insignificant figure. There is of course not the smallest chance that such terms will be accepted. They will not even be discussed. Personally I cannot blame the Polish Government for refusing to treat on such a basis, nor do I criticise the conclusion which they draw, namely, that any negotiation with Moscow before the coming battle is mere trifling and can by no possibility lead to serious result. Meantime the fact that any such basis has been thought possible in London has not improved the position or authority of the British Section of the Anglo-French Mission.

Warsaw, 12th August, 1920.—After communicating his incredible armistice terms to the English Government Kameneff appears to have complained that the representatives of the Russian Command

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had waited in vain for the Polish armistice delegates ever since the evening of 9th August. This is adding misstatement to insult. Meantime Moscow refuses to take in Polish wireless.

Warsaw, 13th August, 1920.—The following is the military position:

The Polish troops are centred on a line 20 kilometres north of Warsaw. The battle has just begun. Weygand considers that the Polish force is sufficient to withstand the enemy's attack provided the leaders keep their heads and the troops do their duty. Other authorities are less confident.

The diplomatic position is as follows:

The Polish Government is genuinely anxious for peace, but they will not agree to any disarmament which leaves them helpless before the Bolsheviks. Nor would they accept Bolshevik dictation as to internal affairs. They are violently opposed to any delivery of arms to the Soviet.

Warsaw, 13th August, 1920.—I have just returned from the front line near Radzymin, about 12 miles north of Warsaw.

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The Bolshevik attack has not yet developed fully, but while I was there a fairly heavy artillery fire was being maintained on both sides. The battery I was with was firing at 5,000 and 6,000 metres.

This morning a few Bolshevik cavalry created a panic, and a whole Polish Battalion was only rallied by a threat that runaways would be shot.

A young French officer who had been at the front all day said the Bolsheviks were weak enough but he doubted the Poles standing at all. If they would fight they could win.

On the way back I came across some Bolshevik prisoners who had just been taken. They were mild, downtrodden peasants without enthusiasm, fanaticism or conviction. They had good boots—no uniforms—and looked fairly well fed. They said, however, that until they got into Poland their fare had been very scanty. Jewish Commissaires did everything in their division—commandeered food—gave orders—explained objectives. When the soldier asked about peace, the Commissaire told them Poland has asked for peace but in conjunction with England —Bolsheviks will have nothing to do with England!

The soldiers do not talk of their Army as "we" but of "the Bolshevik Army," as if they had nothing in common with it but forced service.

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These men came from the Ukraine and had served under Denikin and had been taken prisoner by the Bolsheviks and made to serve. They said the Bolshevik Army was bad and was short of ammunition —but the Denikin Army had been worse, the officers doing nothing but drink and play cards.

The general impression they gave was that of good-natured serfs, who were just driven forward by Commissaires and Chinese—their only desire was to get home. This applies to nine-tenths of the prisoners I have seen—the other tenth appear fanatical devils.

On getting back to the Legation at Warsaw—13th August, 7 p.m.—I found that all preparations had been made for leaving Warsaw at 11 p.m. by special train, including two carriages for the Diplomatic Corps. This decision had been arrived at on the strong advice of Général Henrys and Général Billot after receipt of news from the front brought by officers of the French Military Mission. Their opinion was that the Polish troops were resisting badly, and that there was a considerable probability of precipitate flight. An intercepted radio indicated that the Bolshevik general attack was to take place at 5 a.m. to-morrow morning. Général Henrys had ordered the Headquarters Staff of the French Mission,

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with the exception of a few leading officers who had special cars, to retire to Lodz. The Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs had written that the Government could not assume responsibility for the safety of the Diplomatic Corps after to-night.

Hurried arrangements were therefore made to clear out what is still left of the diplomatic and consular bodies, with the exception of the Italians who have been specially instructed not to leave until after the Polish Government itself left. The Papal Nuncio, who, conjointly with Sir Horace Rumbold, had negotiated the arrangements for the evacuation of the Diplomatic Corps, will also remain.

After a night of considerable confusion and bustle the train eventually got away from the Warsaw goods station about 2 a.m. At the last minute one of the coaches intended for the Diplomatic Corps broke down.

Very slow progress was made during the night owing to constant blocks on the line, but we reached Lodz about 9 a.m. next morning.

General Weygand, General Radcliffe and Sir Percy Loraine, Counsellor of the British Legation, decided to remain in Warsaw and see how events developed. They were instructed to avoid all undue risks of capture and to take special precautions to keep the motor-cars, with which they were provided under reliable

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supervision and plentifully provided with tyres and inner tubes.

There is singularly little alarm among the mass of the population. The upper classes have already left the town, in many cases having placed their pictures and other valuables in charge of the Museum authorities. Warsaw has been so often occupied by foreign troops that the event in itself causes neither the excitement nor alarm which would be produced in a less experienced city. Even the fact that the invaders are Bolsheviks with no sympathy for White Poles, as they call the squirearchy of this country, fails to cause the terror which would be felt elsewhere in such circumstances.

Meantime Pilsudski had left Warsaw twenty-four hours earlier, namely, on the evening of 12th August. In accordance with the Polish plan of 6th August, he proceeded by motor-car up the left bank of the Vistula in order to put himself at the head of the five and a half Divisions. This force was composed of elements which could ill be spared from the defence of Warsaw and Lwow. The scheme agreed upon between Pilsudski and the other military authorities on 6th August provided that the flank attack should not commence until 17th August. There was thus a dangerous

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interval of at least three days between the date of the grand Russian assault on Warsaw and the commencement of Pilsudski's flank attack to effect a diversion for the relief of the capital. The calculation made was that the strength of the artillery massed in Warsaw would be sufficient to enable the Polish forces to hold out, but Pilsudski himself was apprehensive and other military authorities shared his apprehension. Troops defending a large town like Warsaw are liable to be infected by the panic of civilian inhabitants, and panic was not unlikely to occur. Pilsudski's proceedings from the time he arrived on the Wieprz until 17th or 18th August are of such interest that I give (on p. 124) a translation of several passages from his own account. Pilsudski's story not only gives a clear description of the strategic combination which he had devised, but incidentally reveals his characteristics in a manner not obtainable except from a personal narrative.

THE SUPREME CRISIS

I have now brought the narrative of events in Warsaw up to the eve of the supreme crisis. The accompanying Map C gives the situation of the respective forces on the evening of 12th August. It will be seen that the Russian Commander had not concentrated his full strength against the town of Warsaw. On the contrary he had dissipated his force

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in three directions. First, in detaching a considerable section to advance along the Prussian border and take Thorn. Secondly, by detaching a still larger body to pass by the Warsaw front in a westerly direction, with a view to crossing the Vistula below Warsaw, subsequently attacking Warsaw from the west and south. Thirdly, he had allowed the force on his extreme left to devote its attention to the capture of Lwow instead of protecting the left wing of his main attack on Warsaw. The explanation of these errors was the conviction that the Polish forces were thoroughly demoralised and incapable of serious resistance. In the history of the previous month there was much to justify this view. There can be little doubt that Toukhatchevsky believed that he could take Warsaw when he chose, and that he preferred to delay the capture until the force he had detached to the right had crossed the Vistula, and thus cut off the Polish retreat.

The precise authorship of the Polish plan of defence is not known, but statements made both by Weygand and Pilsudski point to the conclusion that the boldest measures included in the scheme were due to the personal initiative of Pilsudski. His plan was briefly as follows: To concentrate a striking force of five and a half Divisions on the River Wieprz. In order to achieve this he withdrew units both from the army defending Warsaw as well as from the force defending Lwow, those taken from the southern army being picked

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troops. The scheme provided that these five and a half Divisions should assemble by 13th August behind the Wieprz in the vicinity of Deblin, and should be so organised as to be capable of extreme mobility. The idea was to allow the Russians to attack Warsaw and become thoroughly engaged with the Polish troops defending the town. Although these Polish troops had been weakened they were thought capable of maintaining an adequate defence for three days, after which a flank attack from Deblin would materialise and afford relief to Warsaw by disturbing the enemy's communications. The Polish arrangements were carried out according to plan. Pilsudski left Warsaw on the evening of 12th August and put himself at the head of the mobile attacking force. Two surprises awaited him on arrival. The 21st Corps had retired the day before, giving up a strong position at Kock without justification. The troops with some exceptions were badly equipped, having in many cases no boots, while the reinforcements sent to increase the numbers had been so distributed that men armed with French rifles were allotted to Battalions armed with Mausers and vice versa. Two days were spent in putting matters right as far as time allowed. While the equipment was poor and there were many defects of organisation Pilsudski was gratified to find that the spirit of the men was much better than he had anticipated after so long and so painful a retreat.

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Meantime on August 14 the Bolshevik attack on Warsaw had commenced. The first day's fighting was by no means reassuring. Certain battalions were reported to have behaved badly, and the suburb of Radzymin in the immediate vicinity of Warsaw was lost, retaken and lost again. On the evening of the 14th Pilsudski received alarming telegrams from Warsaw, painting the situation in most gloomy colours and urging him to afford assistance either by bringing back his troops or by anticipating the date originally fixed for his flank attack. Pilsudski decided to adhere as far as possible to his original plan, merely advancing the date by twenty-four hours. The bad news confirmed him in the urgency of striking—striking hard, but he did not otherwise modify his plan. He reiterated the orders to his attacking force, urging upon them the necessity of a rapid advance, each Division to move independently of that on its right or left and on no account to wait to preserve alignment.

There can be no doubt that the Polish strategy involved a grave risk to Warsaw. The attack on the capital by the Russian force might well lead to the loss of Warsaw before the Polish flank attack had time to dislocate the Russian organisation. It appears from the account subsequently given by Toukhatchevsky of the movements of the Russian Army that the new scheme of diverting forces from the direct attack on Warsaw to an encircling movement across the lower Vistula had upset the original Russian

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plan to a much greater extent than Pilsudski suspected. In his account of the battle the latter says: "How my mind would have been relieved if I could have supposed with any degree of probability that it was not Toukhatchevsky's object to attack Warsaw with all his force. If I had known of the division of his strength into two fractions and the mission assigned to two of his armies not to attack Warsaw directly but to execute a long march and endeavour to force the passage of the great River Vistula, I should have been delivered from half my anxiety. I should not have been obliged to torture my mind on the subject of the *non-sens fondamental* which I had taken as a basis for my decisions." Being in ignorance of the Russian mistake Pilsudski suffered acute anxiety from 6th to 12th August, waiting for the concentration of his own forces south of the Wieprz. He declares that while he noticed considerable movement of Russian troops to the west of Warsaw he could not suspect a diversion as important as that which was carried out. The condition of affairs at Warsaw on 12th August before Pilsudski left is thus described by him: "In taking leave of General Sosnkowski I drew his attention to the disorder which prevailed both in the command of the troops and in their organisation, and I requested him to do his utmost to eliminate the groupings—groups, sub-groups, super-groups, advance-groups and rear-groups —which, notwithstanding my efforts, existed in such

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numbers that there were leaders and staffs without troops, and on certain points 100 soldiers were divided into three groups each commanded by a general. I further urged him to be a tutelary guide for generals who were perpetually disputing with one another and to put an end to the anarchy of command which I feared."

The Flank Attack[1]

The original date fixed for the flank attack was 17th August, but in view of the alarming news from Warsaw Pilsudski decided to commence the advance on the 16th at dawn. Stringent orders were issued to advance with such speed that the troops would reach the main road from Brzesc to Warsaw on the second day. On the 16th and 17th the Polish force under Pilsudski covered an immense distance. It is claimed by Polish authorities that with no other troops would so rapid and long a march have been possible. The enemy were taken completely by surprise. It was not till the 18th, in the early morning, that Pilsudski's troops came up against serious opposition.

How was it that Toukhatchevsky had left his lines

[1] A full account of the events described by the commander of the flank attack (Marshal Pilsudski) will be found on p. 124. A counterpart to Marshal Pilsudski's narrative—a full statement of operations by the commander of the Soviet forces (Toukhatchevsky)—is given on p. 152.

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of communication so unprotected ? There were three reasons. He had relied upon Boudienny's cavalry to keep the Polish right fully occupied ; he had thought the Poles so dispirited as to be incapable of effecting any surprise ; and thirdly, he had come up against such severe fighting in other parts of the field that he had been forced to withdraw the necessary troops from his lines of communication.

During the days between 12th and 18th August, heavy fighting had been carried on in two sectors of the battle area. North of Warsaw and in the immediate vicinity of the city, repeated attacks by the Russian forces had alternately succeeded and failed ; the suburbs of Warsaw had been taken and retaken by the opposing sides, the Polish defence, mainly through superior concentration of artillery, having barely succeeded in keeping the attack at bay. The Russian commander realised too late the fatal dispersion of his forces and sent message after message to his outlying troops, both in the north and the south, to concentrate on the critical point. It was in vain. Both Boudienny and the commander in the north persisted in pursuing their own objectives ; Toukhatchevsky was only able to obtain reinforcements from the troops guarding his lines of communication, and these reinforcements he paid for by leaving his communications open to Polish attack. He had not sufficiently appreciated the Polish capacity for recuperation in a grave national crisis.

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The second area where fighting had been continuous during these days was the district west and north of Warsaw in the vicinity of Modlin. Here the troops, under the energetic leadership of General Sikorski, had not only prevented the Russian forces from crossing the Vistula, but had driven them back to the line of the Narew and Wkra. In this sector also the Russian commander experienced an unpleasant surprise. He had anticipated that the Polish Army would be concentrated around Warsaw, and that his advance to the west of the city in an encircling movement would encounter only scattered bodies of demoralised troops. Here again, he had counted without the energy and military skill of his Polish opponent.

Both sides had taken heavy risks ; time was the decisive factor. If Warsaw fell before Pilsudski's attack developed, his strategy would achieve no decisive purpose. On the other hand, if Warsaw could hold out until Pilsudski reached the Russian lines of communication, there was the possibility that the whole Russian advance would be demoralised.

Pilsudski was the first to realise the surprising success of his manœuvre, and, on the morning of 18th August, in spite of warnings from his subordinate officers, who believed the road to Warsaw to be infested with marauding Cossacks, he decided to return at full speed to the capital in order to organise an aggressive pursuit of the Soviet Army. On arrival in Warsaw he found the general tone depressed.

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There was more anxiety than elation. Warsaw had not realised the success of the flank attack from the Wieprz ; what was present to their minds was the anxious struggle of the last five days, during which at any moment it appeared possible that the Russians would enter Warsaw. There was also acute anxiety on account of the position on the lower Vistula and the renewed attacks on Plock and Wloclawek. The officers with whom Pilsudski deliberated were sceptical about so rapid a success. The habit of defeat involved by the long retreat from Biala had affected men's minds ; they could not realise the complete transformation of the position. Pilsudski insisted that, if full advantage was taken of the situation and that if pursuit was vigorously pushed, the enemy could scarcely escape disaster. While this view was not shared, Pilsudski's orders for an energetic pursuit of the Soviet Army had to be obeyed.

Having briefly surveyed in the foregoing pages the main incidents of the flank attack, I return to a diary of events, as seen from Posen and later from Warsaw.

Posen, 15th August, 1920.—The atmosphere in this province is excellent. There can be little doubt that Posen is the proper base on which to re-form if Warsaw falls.

Large meetings were held here yesterday attended

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by thousands in order to express the thanks of the inhabitants of Posen for French and English assistance. The delegates appointed by these meetings were received by Jusserand and myself. They expressed the unanimous resolution of the province to fight to the end for Polish independence. The objects for which the Great War was waged were analogous to those for which they were now fighting. Anarchy was not less incompatible with liberty and progress than military despotism.

15th August, 1920 (*later*).—Against the favourable impression formed here must be set disquieting news from Warsaw about the fighting on the 14th. Warsaw has implored Pilsudski to attack at once on the flank in order to relieve pressure.

Posen, *16th August*, 1920.—The first line of defence round Warsaw was taken by the Russians on the 14th but has now been recaptured. Everything depends on the Polish counter-offensive on the Wieprz. This starts to-day. It is a gambler's throw. A bold stroke in the unorthodox Pilsudski manner may disconcert the whole Russian plan and break up the attack.

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Posen, 17th August, 1920.—The bold stroke has succeeded beyond expectation: a complete Bolshevik rout appears possible. (See Map D.) Our flank attack from the south-east so surprised the enemy that he put up a very weak resistance; Pilsudski's column has now reached the line Kolbiel-Radzyn-Wlodawa. To the west of Warsaw also, where the Polish forces were thought to be demoralised, they have had considerable success. Moreover, it is expected that the Province of Posen will soon be able to send into the field a large force of trained troops.

Posen, 18th August, 1920.—Success follows success. The victorious advance of Pilsudski's column continues. The Bolshevik force now attacking Warsaw is in grave peril of capture or destruction. Our forces have reached Lukow, the enemy retreating after a slight resistance in the region of Biala and Miedzyrzec. As the moral or immoral force animating Bolshevik troops proceeds largely from commissaires who drive their men forward from the rear, this army is particularly sensitive to any attack from behind.

Posen, 19th August, 1920.—I have telegraphed to London as follows :

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"Polish counter-offensive against left flank of Russian Army has completely reversed position. The enemy, who had advanced to the gates of Warsaw, has been thrown back in disorder behind the Narew and the Bug. The Poles have captured many thousands of prisoners."

The English papers continue to harbour the delusion that the Poles are not willing to make peace except upon extravagant terms. This is quite untrue. Even after the astonishing victory of the last few days Poland is not unreasonable, and desires above everything a durable peace safeguarding her independence and giving security.

All my conversations with Prince Sapieha confirm the view that the Polish authorities will be moderate and sensible as to terms of peace. They are tired of war, and I do not find any of the light-headed aggressiveness which is supposed to be incurable in the Polish national character.

Warsaw, 19th August, 1920.—Returned to Warsaw from Posen on receipt of telegram from Weygand. Arrived 10 a.m. and had conference at once with Weygand and Radcliffe.

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The military situation continues to develop brilliantly. Prisoners taken up to date are variously estimated at from 6,000 to 10,000, and the Russians are retiring in disorder. It cannot yet be called a rout, but it may become one in the course of the next three or four days. Radcliffe says that the Poles do not really follow with sufficient vigour to take full advantage of their success.

Weygand complains bitterly of the surly attitude of Marshal Pilsudski. Last night, at a Council of War, Pilsudski hardly said a word to him, but discussed for two and a half hours in Polish, and paid no attention whatever to his presence. He was anxious to throw up his work at once, but we pointed out that this was out of the question until the battle was over. He still maintained, however, that he desired to return to France directly the Battle of Warsaw was finished. The Poles listened to advice very unwillingly, only told him what suited them, and were not grateful for assistance. He had got them out of their present mess and now wanted to clear off as soon as he could. Radcliffe rather concurred.

The second point on which Weygand wished to speak was that he had had a long conversation with Prince Sapieha, who expressed great anxiety about

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peace negotiations, after a possible complete victory by Poland. Prince Sapieha appeared to fear that the French, having recognised Wrangel, would want Poland to go on fighting in order to achieve the discomfiture of the Bolsheviks. Poland, on the other hand, was anxious for peace—was weary of war. Prince Sapieha felt that while England wanted peace, France wanted the downfall of the Soviets, and he anticipated divergence in the advice given by the two Powers. His suggestion was that he should proceed to France or England as soon as possible with the Anglo-French Mission and that a conference should be held in Paris or London, to settle what line should be taken regarding peace negotiations.

Later in the afternoon I saw Prince Sapieha with Jusserand. Jusserand told him that his apprehension regarding France was entirely unjustified—nothing in his instructions at all bore out the view that France would wish Poland to go on fighting in order to assist General Wrangel ; on the contrary France was most anxious for a reasonable and safe peace. Prince Sapieha appeared much relieved.

He then gave us considerable details of the instructions given to the Polish delegates at Minsk, but the whole situation regarding this negotiation is so profoundly modified by recent military events that the

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instructions of Saturday are now no longer relevant. The general impression he left on my mind was, however, that Poland would be reasonable, provided that there was no interference in the internal affairs of the country and no question of disarmament. Poland was violently opposed to the latter before the Battle of Warsaw; much more so now. If, as appears probable, the battle ends in complete rout of the Bolsheviks, the entire position is fundamentally modified—" the stricken field " starts a new period.

Warsaw, 20th August, 1920.—Weygand is resolute about the desirability of an early departure from Poland, and he is supported by Jusserand. If the French Mission leaves it is clearly expedient that we of the British Mission should take an identical course. The position here has been altogether transformed since our arrival. A great disaster has been averted. Morale is now restored and the Bolsheviks are retreating in disorder. As regards the peace negotiations, these must necessarily enter a new phase, and a clear break from any previous negotiations will increase the chance of an enduring settlement. During the last week the position of the two countries has been fundamentally altered. As regards Minsk as a

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place for negotiation nothing could be more inconvenient and unsuitable. It is inaccessible by telegraph or radio. Messages never seem to get through and messengers are stopped by broken bridges if they are not shot by frontier guards.

The Polish pursuit of the Bolsheviks continues vigorously, the distance covered by Polish units being extraordinary. The total number of prisoners up to date is 15,000, not including large numbers of Bolshevik troops who have abandoned their units and are wandering about the forests. The Russian High Command has sent stringent injunctions to Boudienny to bring help to the north, but in spite of these orders, including one signed by Trotsky, Boudienny still remains with three Cavalry Divisions round Lemberg.

Warsaw, 21st August, 1920.—I have written to Sir Henry Wilson, Chief of the General Staff at the War Office, congratulating him on his foresight in having advocated the despatch of the Anglo-French Mission. What was then considered a forlorn hope has developed into a great military success.

My anticipation that the victory will be complete is based partly upon the fact that the Russian troops, who

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were sent forward to cross the lower Vistula, have, in order to get back to Russia, to go through or over three difficult fences :

(*a*) Sikorski's column.

(*b*) The column now advancing north from Ostrow.

(*c*) Pilsudski's divisions who will soon hold the line Brest-Litovsk to Bialystok.

To avoid surrender to the Poles, I anticipate that a large number of Russian troop will endeavour to escape into East Prussia and will there be disarmed.

There has been a very pretty quarrel between Boudienny in the south and the Moscow authorities. They telegraphed to him to come north in a dire emergency in order to save the situation. He replied that he was within 15 kilometres of Lemberg, and that he would take Lemberg first—thereupon violent telegrams from Trotsky. The result will be that he will fail to assist the north and will also miss Lemberg.

Weygand has undoubtedly been of the utmost assistance to the Polish Government. They continue to treat him rather badly, often discussing military questions in Polish in his presence without any explanations or request for his opinion. However, notwithstanding this, Weygand appears to have established a

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kind of liaison with all the different divisions by means of his French officers, whose work is much appreciated by some commanders, if rather resented by others.

Warsaw, 21st August, 1920.—Pilsudski's view of the situation is justified. The flank attack from the Wieprz has completely disorganised the Russian forces. Toukhatchevsky believed the Polish Army incapable of serious resistance, but they have proved themselves competent to carry out a bold strategic move with intense energy.

The Fifth Army under Sikorski has taken a vigorous part in the struggle. Already since 13th August they had been heavily engaged with the right centre of the Russian forces and had obtained some notable success. It is due to their fighting power under energetic leadership that the Russian plan for crossing the River Vistula was frustrated. Time was thus gained for Pilsudski's flank attack to materialise. In General Sikorski's account of the operations of the Fifth Army, as much importance is attached by him to the fighting on the west of Warsaw as to the flank attack directed by the Commander-in-Chief. This is an over-estimate, but the action of the Fifth Army

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was a notable, indeed an indispensable, element in the great Polish success.

Strategically the subsequent pursuit of the disorganised Russian Army by Polish forces has no special interest. Suffice it to say that by the end of the month the total number of prisoners exceeded 60,000, while a large number of Russian units had been driven over the German frontier and were there disarmed. Of twenty-one Divisions advancing on 12th August to the attack of Warsaw and the surrounding country, seven had been captured, six had been broken up and the remainder were retreating in dire disorder. By 18th October an armistice had been concluded between Russia and Poland based upon a Polish frontier very different from the one demanded by the Russians before the Battle of Warsaw. In March 1921 a treaty of peace was signed between the two countries, since when their relations have been of a normal character. There is no longer any talk of the disarmament of Poland, nor of a reduction of the Army to a low figure. Still less is there any question of establishing Soviet institutions in Poland.

My impressions during the last days in Warsaw are recorded below.

Warsaw, 22nd August, 1920.—It looks as though the

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Poles may capture, destroy or drive the whole Russian force over the German frontier. I have just written to Curzon in this sense, and have added what I feel strongly, namely, my admiration for Polish moderation in the light of so great a success. I have urged him to break off negotiations at Minsk and start again on a new basis, more in harmony with recent events. In dealing with the Soviet it is wise to be short, sharp and precise. They are clever negotiators, having at their disposal a vast amount of promises, which they have no intention of keeping if they find it inconvenient. Experience of negotiations with them in July and August makes me extremely sceptical of any good result except from a convention on the clearest and simplest lines.

Warsaw, 22nd August, 1920.—Polish peasants in the territory recently captured by the Soviet troops are indignant because, despite promises and in conflict with an order, the Soviet Commissaires took everything without payment. Apart from this, the discipline of the Soviet troops in the territory occupied is stated to have been good previous to the defeat. Many captured Soviet officers assert that they served merely because it was their only way to keep from starving.

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Warsaw, 23rd August, 1920.—Reports from the front say that very few Commissaires or Chinese have been captured. The former have a strong propensity to escape into Germany : the latter commit suicide. While the Commissaires are disposed to seek refuge in German territory there is a marked reluctance among the Russian rank and file to follow them. They prefer to surrender in Poland. The latest estimate of captures is as follows : 60,000 prisoners, 200 guns and 1,000 machine guns. Not much ammunition has been taken, but large quantities of paper money which has, of course, a very uncertain value. The Polish Government is becoming seriously embarrassed by the task of feeding so many prisoners. I have made a special point of seeing how prisoners are treated. So far as I can ascertain the conditions are satisfactory. There is no rancour. Prisoners are regarded as victims rather than as hated enemies. Those I have seen are healthy and well fed. Most of them seem glad to be out of the fighting line.

Warsaw, 23rd August, 1920.—In some quarters there is a strong disposition to attribute the failure of the armistice negotiations before the Battle of

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Warsaw to bad faith on the part of the Poles, or to exaggerated demands by them, so that it is worth while to examine what actually took place in July and August last.

On six separate occasions during the last two months the Soviet Government has laid itself open to the charge of deliberately causing delay in the negotiations for an armistice, and on two occasions it has replied by a direct negative to proposals made by the English Government which would have resulted in an immediate suspension of hostilities.

The first instance of delay was between 11th and 18th July. Lloyd George, on 11th July, proposed an immediate armistice and requested a definite reply within a week. The Soviet Government only replied at the extreme limit of time, and then in a negative sense.

On 22nd July Poland sent a wireless message to Moscow proposing a meeting for the discussion of an armistice and asking for a reply by 25th July at latest. The Soviet Government deliberately delayed the meeting until 30th July, under the pretext that that date had been proposed by the Polish Military Commander. The Polish Government state that no such proposal was made, the obvious interest both of Polish diplomatists and Polish generals being to conclude an

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armistice as rapidly as possible, in order to prevent a further advance of the Soviet Army.

The third occasion was between 30th July and 4th August. Directly the Polish delegates arrived at Baranowicze the Soviet representatives insisted that the Poles must have a mandate to make peace as well as to make an armistice. There had been no previous mention of this additional power, and Tchitcherin's statement as to what powers were or were not usual on such occasions is so confused that it does not suggest sincerity.

The fourth occasion was between 4th and 9th August. The Soviet representatives proposed that a meeting should take place at Minsk two days after the meeting at Baranowicze, although, at the same time, they demanded that the Polish delegates should obtain new powers, which could not, by any possibility, be obtained until long after the 4th August, owing to difficulties of travel and communication.

The fifth occasion was between 5th and 10th/11th August. Prince Sapieha, Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, having agreed to the proposed meeting at Minsk, Moscow refused, on five separate occasions, to receive the radio message concerning the meeting, switching off whenever Warsaw attempted to get through.

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Lloyd George, on 6th August, asked Moscow for a ten days' truce, and although the English Government offered quite unusual facilities to the Soviet officers for control of the military situation during this time, Moscow refused to accept it.

The sixth occasion was on 11th August, when the Soviet Government sent a negotiator to the Polish front pretending that they had previously sent a radio message to the Polish Government, fixing the date and hour of appointment. No such radio message was received in Warsaw, and there is no indication of any attempt to send such a message.

During the whole of this period, from 11th July to 13th August, the Soviet Army was pushing on. An intercepted radio message is of interest in connection with the above. It was sent from one Russian Army commander to another on 26th July, and said: "We have arranged not to inform Poles of our armistice conditions before 4th August. You have, therefore, four additional days to continue fighting."

The two occasions on which Moscow has deliberately refused, without adequate reason, fair proposals from the English Government for peace, were when on 18th July Tchitcherin declined the proposed Peace Conference in London, and said that the Soviet Government would make its own terms with Poland,

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and when on 6th August Lloyd George, after a five hours' meeting with Krassin and Kameneff, asked for a ten days' truce.

During the two months mentioned above the Soviet armies advanced 300 kilometres towards Warsaw. The Polish Army was not in a position to offer serious resistance. It was not less clearly the military interest of Moscow to delay negotiations than it was the interest of Warsaw to advance them and to come to some arrangement which would prevent the invasion of ethnographic Poland, and the capture of Warsaw.

The Soviet endeavoured to draw the maximum advantage from what they believed to be their military superiority. They did this with so thin a veneer of pacific intention that no one but a friend with a telescope to his blind eye could have been deceived by it.

The whole Middle East was amazed at the apparent simplicity of large sections of public opinion in Western Europe, and their incomprehensible blindness to quite obvious facts.

So far as blame is concerned, this appears to attach solely to those friends of the Soviet who were foolish enough to claim for them the quality of being sincere and straightforward advocates of universal peace on

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the basis of non-interference and non-propaganda, and of respect for the rights, convictions and independence of others.

This character, the Soviet leaders themselves would be the last to claim. Indeed they would deny it with the utmost indignation, as implying that they had been faithless to the sacred duty of converting the whole world to their doctrines. This process of universal conversion they pursue and prosecute—and are compelled by their fundamental tenets to pursue and prosecute—by whatever means appear at the moment most efficacious, quite independently of any understanding, pledge, agreement or contract.

Warsaw, 24th August, 1920.—Prisoners taken from the 16th Soviet Division say that the Bolshevik *débâcle* is complete (see Map E). They had endeavoured to rally at the Niemen, but this proved impossible owing to the loss of morale. They will have to retire to the Smorgen-Baranowicze line.

Warsaw, 25th August, 1920.—A strong telegram has come in from Lloyd George at Lucerne after his

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interview with Giolitti. The subject is the maintenance of free communication through the Port of Danzig. He states that the object of the Treaty of Versailles in this regard was to secure to Poland without any restriction the free use and service of the port for Polish imports and exports. The High Commissioner is instructed to do everything possible to secure this. If the Danzig dockers refuse to unload the ships, any available labour is to be employed under the protection of the Allied Powers. British and French men-of-war and Allied military forces at Danzig will render all support and if necessary the Allied Contingents will be reinforced. The English Admiralty has been instructed to secure the presence of a suitable naval force at Danzig.

Warsaw, 25th August, 1920.—Percy Loraine has been to visit the Soviet prisoners, and has obtained an interesting picture of conditions in the Soviet Army.

The prisoners interviewed were of various origin, and belonged to different units, so that a general view can be formed. They were: a former Warrant Officer in the Imperial Russian Army who has been serving as Quartermaster-Sergeant; a Cadet Officer

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in an Infantry Regiment of the Imperial Army ; a non-commissioned officer formerly belonging to an Infantry Brigade of the Imperial Army and now serving as a telephonist ; a former railway conductor in the Imperial Russian Railways ; a former N.C.O. in the Imperial Army, now a private in the Bolshevik A.S.C. ; a private in the Imperial Army, now serving as a non-commissioned officer—a civilian who hated Bolshevism and who had unsuccessfully attempted desertion on various occasions ; a Quartermaster-Sergeant, well educated and intelligent, who loathed Bolshevism.

One of the most surprising results of the interviews with the prisoners mentioned was the entire lack of enthusiasm or conviction regarding the Soviet Government, although there was evidently a genuine universal respect for Lenin, who is esteemed the working-man's friend, in contrast to the feeling about Trotsky, who is generally detested and feared. It is a curious fact, also, that all the men, who were questioned out of earshot of the others, were unanimously agreed that, even if Peace came, the Soviet Government was too strong to be upset, at all events for a long time yet. The bellicose section under Trotsky have a strong hold, and now contend that the régime can live only by war. So long as there is war, the driving force is

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exerted by the Commissaires, backed by the Chinese units which are placed at their disposal, and by the terror which the Tcheka and its network of spies and denunciators inspire. It was apparent that this dread institution was greatly feared by all prisoners, who at once lowered their voices when being questioned regarding it. The simpler ones could hardly believe that such an organisation did not exist in Poland. The general impression gained from the interviews was that Trotsky had rendered such services and gained so strong a position that Lenin will be unable to get rid of him. There have been many tentative revolts, but the spy system renders co-operation impossible ; and it has not been difficult, therefore, to suppress isolated attempts ; e.g. in one regiment fifty men were shot for refusing to go to the Polish front. It was alleged that industrial workmen are now hostile to the Soviet Government ; there was a strike in the Putiloff Works at Petrograd in April for better food ; it was ruthlessly suppressed.

The general impression conveyed was that the Jews and Jewish Commissaires were universally detested and the latter particularly feared.

On the way out of the camp where Loraine's motor-car got stuck in a sand road, a mixed party of Poles and Bolshevik prisoners came running out perfectly

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cheerful, in excellent spirits, and apparently on the best of terms with one another.

One of the prisoners interviewed, a Jew, made some interesting statements about railways. All private travelling has been suspended ; an individual can only travel with a special order, and this cannot be obtained except by Communists and is only issued by Commissaires : nobody suspected of anti-Bolshevism can get an order. There are no tickets for sale. The railway service is chaotic ; although quite a number of trains are in circulation, and run eastwards from Moscow as far as Omsk, no one knows when they will reach their destinations. The carriages are filthy, and only Commissaires may travel in first- or second-class carriages.

One prisoner presented a singular case of complete content with the Soviet régime ; his one desire was to return to it. It is fair to say that he was not a Communist and took no interest whatever in politics. He came from the Tambow Government, from a small country town where he had been sublimely happy. There were no Commissaires, there was no interference, there were merely a few intelligent people who had developed the Russian communal system and had established proper exchange between the

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Urban and Rural co-operatives, one of which he directed. He had to work hard, but could make a comfortable living and, as he said, all the people in his district were "good people," so his great hope was to return there. There was a system of licensed purchasers who were allowed to buy a given quantity of their various needs each month. But only "good people" could secure this license. When he was taken for the army in June he was very angry.

The most intelligent of the prisoners was a Quartermaster-Sergeant, formerly a University student, who loathed Bolshevism. When questioned as to whether the Bolsheviks had any real intention of making Peace with Poland, he smiled broadly, and said that the last army order had been to "finish off the Polish Army and take Warsaw." Despite the promises of the Commissaires, he maintained that even the capture of Warsaw would not have meant Peace, and that the next order after that would have been to march on across the German frontier. There was not the slightest doubt in his mind about this. The Bolsheviks were convinced that all Europe would be converted.

None of these men had any idea of the extent of the Bolshevik disaster—they only knew that some-

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thing had gone wrong. Most of them grinned with pleasure when informed of the defeat of the army to which they had belonged.

In train Warsaw–Paris, 26th August, 1920.— We left Warsaw yesterday evening at 9 p.m. The last two days have been passed in an atmosphere of cordiality and congratulation. Recognition centres quite rightly on General Weygand, who has received many marks of public esteem. Up to now the Poles have been rather slow both in understanding the magnitude of their victory and in expressing gratitude to those who have assisted in obtaining it, but they are now making up very handsomely for lost time.

Arrived Cracow in the morning ; the Mission was met by a deputation of the principal citizens, who did everything possible to make the day interesting. The Polish Government had sent down Prince Czartoryski, a great noble, to do the honours. In the evening a banquet was offered by the Municipality, and masses of flowers presented by various Ladies' Associations, etc.

Left Cracow at 9 p.m. and reached Prague early next morning.

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President Masaryk and the principal Ministers offered the Mission a luncheon. Happily there were no speeches. I met for the first time Dr. Beneš, the Foreign Minister, and was much impressed with his intelligence and the breadth of his survey. He has recently been to Serbia and Roumania and has practically concluded a Treaty for mutual defence with these countries. His language was approximately as follows :

" The whole of Central Europe is nervous from the war and excited. They want to be reassured and to settle down. They will not settle down unless they are confident of their strength to resist both aggression and internal trouble. If we can form a group between Czecho-Slovakia, Serbia and Roumania, and add Poland to this, we can be indifferent to any attack from the Soviets or from Russia, and we can also keep Hungary quiet. We should like to add Greece to our alliance, but the Serbians and Roumanians think that Greece has undertaken more than she can execute and that an alliance with her at the present time would involve more potential obligations than probable advantages. We shall, therefore, wait a little time before negotiating with Greece and admitting her to our alliance, though our feelings are quite friendly.

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"About Bulgaria, the feeling in Serbia is favourable on the part of the soldiers, hostile on the part of the politicians. In Roumania it is exactly the opposite —the soldiers are hostile to Bulgaria, or afraid of Bulgaria, or jealous of Bulgaria, while the politicians are rather friendly. So here again we must wait."

So far Beneš.

What a difference victory makes!

A month ago, the atmosphere here was secretly hostile to Poland; to-day exactly the reverse. Had the Anglo-French Mission followed the advice given at Prague in July, we should have abstained from any action at Warsaw. In that case what would have happened? Either victory would not have been won—and this I believe the most probable event, and one that would have been a disaster for all Europe—or victory would have been won by the Poles alone, with Western Europe standing coldly aside. Would that have promoted the friendly feelings between the West and Poland which are so desirable for European peace?

Paris, 29th August, 1920.—A most cordial telegram from the Prime Minister at Lucerne expressing appreciation of the invaluable services rendered by

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the British Mission to Poland, the success of which has exceeded his most sanguine expectations. He desires me to express special thanks to General Radcliffe.

I have also received a letter from Curzon congratulating me on services rendered to England and to Poland "which have contributed very materially to the astounding and by us utterly unexpected recovery of that country when the executioner's axe was already within an ace of its neck."

Paris, 29th August, 1920.—Radcliffe's judgment regarding military events is so calm and reasonable that importance attaches to all his opinions. He holds that the Polish Army has won a victory as dramatic as any in history. All honour to Poland for her achievement, the merit of which is enhanced by the fact that the battle was fought while the Polish Government was being urged by more than one friendly Power to accept the conditions offered by the Soviets.

Radcliffe stresses the point that victory has been obtained less by hard fighting than by skill in manœuvre and by bold strategy. The Russian failure was due in a large measure to the fatal

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but not infrequent mistake of underrating the enemy.

Paris, 1st September, 1920.—The reception of the Mission in Paris has been most cordial. It was enthusiastically cheered at the station on arrival, where a huge crowd greeted us.

The whole Mission proceeded yesterday to Versailles to pay a visit to M. Millerand. The reception was extremely friendly.

From conversation with French officials I gather that to some extent they share the apprehension felt in London that the Poles will be unreasonable about their eastern frontier. I have endeavoured to dispel anxiety on this head, as I have always found Prince Sapieha moderate and sensible on the subject. I ventured also to suggest that the importance of the French Military Mission to Poland is so great that they ought to select as the head of it the most capable officer at their disposal. The matter is one of importance not only for France but for Europe.

Paris, 2nd September, 1920.—It is less than six weeks since we left London and Paris on what was

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then thought a hopeless Mission. It would be difficult to compress more rapid changes of fortune into so short a space of time, or to experience a more violent contrast between expectation and actual event. The frustration of hope is the common lot of Humanity; it is pleasant and refreshing to have been privileged to take part in an episode when reality so far outran anticipation.

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GENERAL REVIEW OF THE FIGHTING NEAR WARSAW, FOLLOWED BY INDIVIDUAL NARRATIVES BY THE TWO COMMANDERS

I HAVE thought that the best method to enable the reader to form an impartial judgment on the Battle of Warsaw is to supplement my own survey, which is given below, by accounts of the battle furnished by the two Commanders-in-Chief. It is possible to do this, for Generals Pilsudski and Toukhatchevsky, at the head respectively of the Polish and Russian Armies, have both compiled full narratives. Characteristic extracts from these will enable the reader to check my own review of events.

The following is my survey :

It would be a profound mistake to regard the fighting in Poland as being similar, in any essential particular, to that in the Great War. It should be classified with a totally different period—probably some 200 years earlier—and belongs by its leading characteristics to an antecedent era of civilisation, and to an earlier stage in the development of the art of war.

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Both the Polish and Soviet Armies were eighteenth century rather than modern in many aspects, particularly in this, that there was no special animosity or rancour between the mass of combatants on the two sides. They were in the fight either through compulsion and fear of being shot at home, or because there was no other immediately available means of livelihood. In the Soviet Army there was no particular enthusiasm for the cause for which they were fighting, and there was a definite hatred for the direct representatives of that cause.

As regards the actual combat, it may be said that the fighting was less brutal than it was in the Great War ; there were no savage attacks, there was no question of any heroic resistance. It was a war of manœuvre and of position. The game of war was conducted on lines similar to chess between high-class players—directly one side had a serious advantage the other side resigned and withdrew to another table or another field. When considerably outnumbered, outmanœuvred, or outflanked, the troops either retired or surrendered ; authority among their officers was insufficient to induce them to take any other course. Thus the number of killed and wounded was not large when compared with Great War standards.

The mobility of the troops on both sides was

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remarkable, especially that of the Poles. They covered distances unattainable by the best European armies, and this on poor rations with or without boots. Their mobility was greatly increased by the fact that they were usually accompanied by light country carts—two ponies harnessed to a ramshackle four-wheeled vehicle, built on lines somewhat similar to a miniature brewer's dray. These rattled along behind the troops both by day and by night, picking up the weary and footsore, and giving others an occasional lift. These country carts were also used to take captured prisoners back from the front—the drivers being generally willing to give anybody a lift, whether friend or captured enemy.

Poland may be considered an ideal country to fight in. I have not seen any European general, particularly any general of cavalry, whose military ardour has not been stirred on surveying it. There are no big obstacles, there is enough wood to afford concealment and facilitate surprise, the rivers are few, and crossing them is just difficult enough to afford some scope for ingenuity and engineering knowledge. It is essentially a country for military manœuvre, and it is by manœuvring capacity and by mobility that battles here are decided.

Nothing illustrates more correctly the general

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nature of the warfare than the behaviour of prisoners and the methods of treatment applied to them. The usual demeanour of the Soviet prisoners I saw—and I saw large numbers of them at stages of captivity varying from five minutes to a month—was that of relief and of relative satisfaction. They realised that they were more or less safe, that they would have adequate, if not abundant, food, that there would be no Jewish Commissaires to shoot them if they ran away, nor Chinese to torture them if they offended or spoke evil of the Soviet. It might be true that they had lost their chance of the pleasures of war, but they were apathetic about the joys of victory; they realised from past experience that the ultimate profit from sacking a town is greater in theory than in fact, and that the allied and associated pleasures may easily be overrated.

So far as I have seen, the Polish officers and authorities were neither harsh nor cruel. They treated the prisoners just as well as they treated their own soldiers and the prisoners showed no signs of being bullied.

I perceived very little resentment against the ordinary prisoners on the part of the villagers, although they would kill a Commissaire. They talked with the former quite affably and gave them a lift to prison

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camps on their carts, a common hatred of Jewish Commissaires and usurers making them wondrous kind. One soldier with a bayonet was often given charge of a squad of twenty or thirty prisoners; sometimes an unarmed peasant would bring in two or three Bolsheviks.

Judging after the event one can see that Bolshevik strategy, on invading ethnographical Poland, was faulty in the extreme. Instead of concentrating upon the capture of Warsaw and marching direct for it, they distributed their strength on several objectives:

(*a*) Cutting the corridor between Danzig and Warsaw, probably near Graudenz, and to this end sending a considerable force along the German frontier.

(*b*) Endeavouring to cross the Vistula at Vlotslavsk and Plutsk.

(*c*) Endeavouring to cross the Vistula above Warsaw at Kora-Kalvariya.

The credit of designing the plan which led to so great a success, viewed broadly, was due to Polish initiative. But one must add this: without General Weygand there would probably have been no plan, or possibly there would have been a great many plans vaguely discussed and not one firmly adopted and carried out. General Weygand's personal energy in supervising the details and execution, and bring-

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ing order and method to the operations of the Polish force, were essential to success. Without them the plan might well have failed. General Weygand also rendered marked service by bringing the officers of the French Mission into close contact with the troops at the front. Their presence undoubtedly infused the troops with new life and vigour. General Weygand's share in the victory is therefore a very large one, and he thoroughly deserved all the honours he received from the Polish and French Governments. General Radcliffe also deserves high praise for his sound judgment and his close co-operation with General Weygand. His loyal support went far to maintain the authority of Weygand at Polish Headquarters. The increased confidence produced by the arrival of the Anglo-French Mission may be estimated from the difference of tone apparent at Warsaw between 24th July, when we arrived, and 15th August, when the Polish Army achieved so notable a victory. Had there been no Mission, or had we been unsuccessful in establishing communication between Warsaw and Danzig, or again had we failed to inspire the Polish Government with reliance on the support to be expected from the Western Powers, I have little doubt that Toukhatchevsky's view would have been justified

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and that the Polish Army, driven back so far, would have been incapable of serious resistance and impotent to prevent the Bolshevik troops from capturing Warsaw.

To the credit of the Polish nation it is to be recorded that when they realised the services rendered by General Weygand, which was not until 23rd August, they made up by a tardy enthusiasm for all previous coldness. The last two days in Warsaw before our departure on 25th August were a veritable triumph for the General, who not only received the Cross of the Order of Military Virtue, but was presented with a sword of honour of a unique kind in the shape of the actual sword belonging to Stephen Batory, King of Poland from 1572 to 1584. General Radcliffe was also presented with the Polish Military Medal for services under fire, and received other testimonies of recognition for his admirable work.

Another fact to the credit of the Poles. There was no undue elation and no boasting after the Russian defeat. The streets maintained the normal attitude which they had preserved throughout the crisis. There had been no sign of panic or alarm when the Bolsheviks were within 15 miles of the capital. There was no exuberant rejoicing when 60,000 of the enemy had been taken prisoner, and the entire force which had menaced Warsaw was in full flight.

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MARSHAL PILSUDSKI'S NARRATIVE[1]

"I REMEMBER distinctly, and it is with pleasure that I recall the fact, that one day whilst examining the sketch of the daily position as shown by the reports received, I noted something quite unexpected, and which I had never met with until then, namely, that the Division on the right wing of our First Army—the 1st Lithuanian White Army—had been forestalled in its retreat towards the west by the Soviet Fourth Army, so that it had been obliged to bend somewhat strongly its exposed right wing. Moreover, M. Toukhatchevsky himself admits that the resistance of our First Army on the Narew line was the first somewhat serious obstacle which he encountered on his march to the Vistula. But in the decision which I had to arrive at, at this time, it was no longer a case of changing individuals; it became necessary to alter on a large scale the organisation of the command, and to see that suitable people were given charge of appropriate missions.

[1] Free translation from "L'Année 1920," by Joseph Pilsudski (La Renaissance du Livre, Paris).

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To have acted in any other way would have endangered the possibility of our resuming the initiative at the opportune moment. These two duties, which did not form part of the subjects under discussion, were thrust upon me, and the first was an almost crushing one, inasmuch as the very basis of such a duty was of necessity an absurdity (*non-sens*) both strategically and logically. It was this duty which I had more especially to take into account when I was endeavouring to arrive at a decision on the evening of 5th August, and during the night from the 5th to 6th, not as the result of advice, but alone in my study at the Belvedere.

"There is on record an admirable expression made by the greatest authority on the human soul in war time—Napoleon—who said of himself that when about to take an important decision in the war, he was like a girl giving birth to a child. Since that night, I have often been reminded of the profound subtlety of Napoleon's thought; he, who despised the weakness of the fair sex, compares himself—a giant in will and genius—to a weak young woman on her bed, a prey to the pains of labour. He used to say of himself that in those moments he was pusillanimous. I, myself, a prey to the same pusillanimity, could not overcome the absurdity of the theme of the battle, which condemned the bulk of

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my forces gathered at Warsaw to passive resistance. In my opinion, the counter-attack could not be launched from Warsaw nor from Modlin. This would mean a frontal attack against the main forces of the enemy, which, as I thought, were concentrated before Warsaw, and up to that time neither our forces nor our command had been able to hold the victorious enemy. Besides, the nightmare of defeat and the excuses of poltroons were sweeping over the whole town.

"A striking proof of this is to be found in the despatch of the Delegation ordered to sue for peace. I, myself, had come to the conclusion that Warsaw should adopt a passive rôle, namely, resisting the pressure to which she was about to be subjected from outside ; nevertheless, at that moment I did not wish to impose this passive rôle on the majority of our forces. But when I again contemplated the possibility of a reduction of the garrison, thus condemned to inactivity, I began to think that Warsaw would not be able to hold out, and that departure of any of the troops already concentrated there might bring about a further weakening of morale—already very weak—and render more doubtful the possibility of defending the capital.

"From a study of what had taken place at Lwow,

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I was quite aware of what a large town is like when the fighting is being carried out at its very doors, and that in its streets the troops at the rear would be circulating in all directions, as was the case in Warsaw. The soldier in such moments is obliged to share the life of the town, and every change of feeling in the population, in one direction or the other, destroys or strengthens the morale of the combatant. I remembered very well that the greater part of the troops assembled in Warsaw arrived in the capital after a long series of reverses, after repeated and serious defeats. Any reduction of their number, or the withdrawal from the capital of units already there, appeared to me to be dangerous. Was one then to condemn to passivity ten Divisions—practically half of the Polish forces? That was the question I asked myself. The extraordinary energy displayed by General Sosnkowski, in all that concerned Warsaw, caused attention to be drawn to the enormous proportion of our artillery in the garrison—a proportion without precedent in our Army. It nearly approached the proportion considered ideal in standards drawn from the Great War.

"I hesitated to place my trust in the morale of the troops and in that of the inhabitants, and I could not be sure of the military and civil authorities.

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"The first thing that struck me was the slow retreat of our Fourth Army from the Bug. The natural direction in which the enemy was pushing it was bringing it on to the Vistula between Warsaw and Deblin. Now, in that direction, there were neither bridges nor any other means of crossing. In the event of the enemy pushing vigorously in the centre, our Fourth Army might be driven into a corner on the Vistula and find itself in an extremely critical position. It was, therefore, necessary to incline it either towards Warsaw or towards Deblin, or, alternatively, divide it into two sections, one diverted to the north and the other to the south. In this way, if the whole or part were diverted to the south, one would have forces independent of Warsaw. And this, again, necessitated a defensive force for the left bank of the Vistula between Warsaw and Deblin.

"Such a move involved an increase of the passive troops and a reduction of the troops available for attack. The morale of the Fourth Army did not inspire confidence. The unexpected loss of Brzesc did not encourage me to place much reliance on them.

"I had a second reserve of troops in the south, from which I had already drawn the 18th Division of Infantry. The south was in a better position than the north, and the exceptional fighting ability and

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indomitable activity of its commanding officers was well in evidence from the morale of the troops drawn from there. A levy on this force was rendered easier by the fact that Boudienny's cavalry had been thrown back so that our train movements could not be hampered by an active enemy cavalry. When, however, I considered the question of withdrawal of troops from the south, I reverted to the conclusion that I must not weaken the forces there to any considerable extent. The victory over Boudienny was by no means complete, and while it might seem impossible for him to undertake a new offensive for some time, it might well be that, if I attempted to weaken our forces at this point, the enemy cavalry who had done so much harm in the past might recommence their activities. And the most natural movement, and the one most dangerous for us, would be the concentration of all the Soviet forces. Thus, I came to the conclusion that I could only withdraw two regiments of infantry from the south, with perhaps a brigade of cavalry. Such a small force could hardly strengthen to any great extent the force of the counter-attack, nor could it have a great influence on the morale of the other troops.

" On taking into account all these facts, the sole conclusion to which I could come was that, for the counter-attack, I could not count on more than three

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or four Divisions of infantry, reinforced by a small body of cavalry. And what was that in the face of an enemy who, up till now, had constantly broken the resistance of the greater part of our army ?

" All my endeavours were paralysed by this fundamental absurdity, by our weakness and the excessive risk involved. The whole situation appeared to me gloomy and desperate, the only bright spot on my horizon being the disappearance of the cavalry in our rear, and the powerlessness of the Twelfth Soviet Army, who were unable to recover from the defeat which they had experienced in the Ukraine. The reorganisation of the Command was relatively clear. From the moment it became necessary for the greater part of the troops to be closely concentrated at Warsaw and its surroundings, the need for unified command was obvious, although the number of the troops centred there would have justified division into two armies. Our counter-attack had to be commanded by a single chief. The most difficult task fell on the force which, although the weaker, was, contrary to all commonsense, about to undertake the decisive move.

" I decided in the first place, not to ask any of my subordinates to assume the responsibility of a scheme of such impractical character, seeing that, as Commander-in-Chief, I chose this absurdity as the starting-

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point of my operations. It seemed only right that I should assume the responsibility for the carrying out of the most absurd part of the plan, and, as a matter of principle, I decided that the troops for the counter-attack should be commanded by me in person. Moreover, this thought pleased me in the sense that during the time of execution of this operation, I should not be exposed to the suggestions of cowards and the sophisms of the incompetent.

"After having compared alternative schemes, I decided on two things: to withdraw towards the south the major part of our Fourth Army, and to take from the existing forces in the south—for the purpose of strengthening the counter-attacking forces—the two Divisions which I considered the best, the 1st and 3rd of the Legion.

"When, on the morning of the 6th, General Rozwadowsky reported to my office for orders, he arrived with a sketch outline which represented a new proposition or plan. This was in regard to the mission of the Fourth Army, which had evidently been obliged to withdraw to a sector of the Vistula unprovided with bridges and the necessary means of crossing this large obstacle. On the sketch-map, General Rozwadowski had endeavoured to utilise means of withdrawal of the Fourth Army, so as to

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concentrate (as far as I can remember) in the vicinity of Garwolin, certain Divisions of this Army; hence, on the supposition that the enemy would frankly concentrate their forces before Warsaw, he recommended—with this group well in hand—an attack towards the north, that is to say, towards Warsaw. I immediately rejected this proposal; I pointed out that a concentration of troops under such conditions seemed to me an extremely doubtful move.

"The enemy, who so far had been superior to us, could easily stop such a change of front, and our force would either be driven into Warsaw or, worse still, driven back on the Vistula, at the risk of a catastrophe.

"I decided at once that the Fourth Army was to retire in greater part to the south, to concentrate there and prepare for a counter-attack. On the other hand, I ordered a levy on our Southern forces of two Divisions, the 1st and 3rd of the Legion, to reinforce the troops which would be taking part in the counter-attack.

"After a short discussion, we chose for our area of concentration the country covered by the Wieprz; this enabled us to rest our left wing on Deblin and protect the bridges over the Vistula and the Wieprz. It was on this basis that the order of 6th August was drafted.

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" My main order preparatory to the battle was drawn up almost at the same moment as that of M. Toukhatchevsky. When I compare these two orders, I deeply regret not having been able, at that moment, to have had a glimpse of the secret plan of campaign as made by M. Toukhatchevsky.

" How my mind would have been relieved ! How many easier solutions could have been found, if I could have known or even supposed with a certain degree of probability, that M. Toukhatchevsky had not intended that all his troops should be used for the attack on Warsaw. If I had known how his troops had been split up into two sections, that the object of two of his armies was not to attack on Warsaw, but to carry out a long march, and the crossing, perhaps longer still, of a large river—the Vistula—I might have been saved half the anxiety I felt for the safety of Warsaw. I am almost convinced that I need not have tortured my mind regarding the fundamental absurdity which I had taken as the basis of my decisions. The two Soviet armies would necessarily lose much time on their march, and time at this moment was of great value ; such a loss of time to the enemy was gain for me.

" If I had realised the position, I should perhaps have endeavoured to take advantage of the concentra-

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tion of my own troops to manœuvre along the interior lines and defeat the enemy piecemeal. Perhaps even I should have ordered our Fourth Army to retreat on Warsaw and nowhere else.

"The absurdity of my general order of operations was made worse by the fact that the passive groups were already concentrated, or would be concentrated, by a retreat in the most natural and easy direction. The real doubt as to the success of the project proceeded from the active group—the group of attack. As a matter of fact, the troops which formed part of this group were in immediate contact, and in some cases actively engaged, with the enemy, and the direction to be followed in order to reach the base where the troops were to concentrate, demanded a complicated manœuvre. It was for this reason that the Divisions of the Fourth, Fourteenth, Sixteenth and Twenty-first Armies (who were still, on the 6th and 7th August, engaged in violent combat on the Bug) needed not only to be disengaged from the enemy, but further to make a dangerous, practically flank march, in order to reach a position south of the Wieprz.

"This applied above all to the 14th Division, which was the farthest north, near Janow, who had to make the longest oblique march in order to reach Deblin.

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An unfavourable incident of any sort ; more energetic pressure of the enemy at such and such a point ; the lowering of the morale—which had been so frequent up to the present and which might occur in any Division or Regiment—any of these happenings might endanger the whole manœuvre, and it was a question whether the shock troops that I had decided to command myself could be concentrated in time, and would be capable of performing the duty I had placed on them. The situation was still more difficult for the two Divisions which I should be drawing from the south with a view to assisting the counter-attack, namely, the 1st and 3rd of the Legion. I proposed to reinforce them with a small body of cavalry, which naturally had greater facility in breaking contact. As to the two Divisions of infantry, separated by a distance of from 150 to 250 kilometres from the concentration base and in contact with the enemy, their task was, as I thought then and as I still think, beyond average human capacity. Inwardly, I calculated, despite the different wording of the order, that General Rydz-Smigly, to whom fell the responsibility of this undertaking, would succeed in reaching the concentration base with only one Division of infantry assisted by one brigade of cavalry. As for the other Division, to which I had likewise given the order

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to march towards the north, I hardly dared think about it.

"It is, therefore, not surprising that, from the 6th to the 12th, I followed the development of this dangerous manœuvre with feverish interest. During those days, careful study of the enemy's movements and manœuvres did not lead me to suspect in the least that the troops of M. Toukhatchevsky were carrying out his order of the 8th, and avoiding Warsaw. It is true that I certainly noted some movement towards the west, that is to say, towards the Vistula, below Modlin. Ciechanow and Mlawa had certainly been attacked, and I had also considered unimportant the movements in the direction of Plock and Wloclawek. But these were cavalry movements which, as I thought, were aimed at cutting the communications of Warsaw with Danzig. With regard to the retreat of the Divisions of our Fourth Army, this was carried out practically without difficulties, because the enemy had openly directed their Sixteenth Army towards the north, the left wing of this Army following the road Brzesc-Warsaw. As soon as the Divisions of our Fourth Army had crossed this road in order to proceed to the south towards the Wieprz, enemy pressure ceased. I could thus be sure that the three Divisions would

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gain the protection behind the Wieprz and be at my disposal.

"General Rydz-Smigly carried out his mission in a most skilful manner. The operations undertaken by him and the manœuvres of his two Divisions, the 1st and 3rd, constitute one of the most glorious exploits in the history of the Polish Army. General Rydz-Smigly and his two Divisions succeeded in solving a complicated mission by adopting an aggressive attitude.

"The fighting of the 1st and 3rd Divisions of Infantry of the Legion in the south was marked by a curious result: on one of our officers who was killed near Chelm the enemy found a copy of our order of 6th August, which commanded a new formation of our forces. This imprudence, so frequent in war, and so severely punished by all Army rules, was the cause of the secret of our movements falling into the hands of the Soviets. I have since read M. Toukhatchevsky's and M. Serghieff's statements that the G.H.Q. of the Soviet did not in the least believe in the genuineness of this document, for the Twelfth Soviet Army had reported that, at Hrubieszow, the Divisions destined to attack towards the north, the 1st and 3rd, were fighting desperately in the south, and not in the neighbourhood of Lubartow, whither the order of

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the 6th sent them. M. Toukhatchevsky (see p. 161) states that he had discussions on this subject with his superior officer, but he did nothing to protect his left wing or his menaced rear which were in danger.

"Before leaving Warsaw, on the evening of the 12th, I had arranged for a final interview with three leading personalities. In the course of this interview, I proclaimed my views on the situation as follows :

"(1) Of the twenty Divisions of infantry taking part in the battle which was to decide the fate of our capital, about fifteen—that is to say, three-quarters of them—would assume a passive rôle, and about one-quarter—that is to say, five and a half Divisions (of which one was delayed)—would take an active part in attack. Warsaw, where there were assembled ten and a half Divisions, possessed considerable artillery, and I was assured that the artillery fire in combination with aeroplanes, also assembled there, would suffice to keep the enemy back. I did not consider, therefore, that the factor of time was to be of such great importance to Warsaw. I therefore held the view that it was better for the general scheme of operations that the enemy should suffer heavy losses in attacking Warsaw, and should be closely held by the Warsaw garrison so that it would not be possible for them to rush troops to

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resist the advance of the five Divisions which I commanded.

"(2) I pointed out that the troops assembled for the counter-attack, that is, five and a half Divisions, should have sufficient time to rest themselves, and reorganise, after being joined by reinforcements. It was also necessary for me to have a certain amount of time to inspect the troops, for I feared that their state of *morale* was not sufficiently strong to undertake an operation as delicate as it was dangerous. Also, I did not think I should be able to commence operations before 15th August; at the same time I believed that two days after the commencement of operations I should succeed in drawing near enough to Warsaw for my Divisions to co-operate with the major part of the forces assembled there. I figured that it would eventually be desirable for the southern sector of the garrison of Warsaw, reinforced by all the artillery possible, to assemble in this sector, and commence an attack along the line from Warsaw to Minsk and Brzesc. Indeed, my intention was to attack on a very large front, and in these circumstances the 14th Division of Infantry, which formed the left wing, and which had to follow the Lublin road, would find itself in a very critical position; since, if entirely

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isolated, it would come up against the main body of the enemy forces.

"(3) I pointed out the menace which made the movement I was about to direct extraordinarily dangerous. In withdrawing from the south the 1st and 3rd Divisions of the Legion, I in reality left a large and dangerous gap open to the Boudienny cavalry. Although in this district our cavalry had been ordered to stop the advance of Boudienny, previous experience did not inspire great confidence. I apprehended that all, or a section, of the Boudienny cavalry would debouch from the Sokal or from Hrubieszow and thus annihilate my projected scheme. I pointed out also that on the Bug I only possessed a very weak force to stand up against the Twelfth Soviet Army.

"Finally, when taking leave of General Sosnkowski, I drew his attention to the disorder which reigned, not only in the command, but in the reorganisation of the troops, and asked him to do everything possible to eliminate the various groupings and groups, sub-groups, super-groups, advance groups and rear groups. In certain cases 100 soldiers were split up into three groups each commanded by a general. I advised him also to make a great effort to be a tutelary guide to the generals who were continually discussing and disputing, and to bring to an end the anarchy of com-

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mand which I so feared. In my absence, the defence of the town might be compromised at the very moment when we had a real superiority over the enemy.

" Having settled these questions, I left Warsaw on the evening of the 12th. I left with a deep feeling of the absurdity of the situation, and even with a certain disgust of myself, because the weakness and powerlessness of the Poles forced me to go against all sense of logic and all the sane laws of warfare. Indeed, I own that I experienced a sense of relief in leaving the place where minutes became hours, hours days and days weeks.

" On my arrival at Pulawy, which I made my headquarters, I came to several conclusions. Firstly, that the morale of all the Divisions, and there were four concentrated there, was not so bad as I expected, although just before my arrival one of the Divisions, the 21st, had abandoned the bridgehead at Kock on the Wieprz when attacked by the enemy. I did not believe, however, that this loss of morale was beyond remedy.

" On the other hand, I ascertained that reinforcements had been badly distributed in view of the armaments in their possession. Battalions armed with French rifles had been placed in Divisions armed with German Mausers or Austrian Mannlicher

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rifles. I noted, moreover, the very poor state of the equipment and uniforms of the troops. I had never in all my experience of warfare seen such ragamuffins, as I called them. In the 21st Division, half of the men appeared before me, at Firlej, practically naked. I recalled the many times various of my subordinates had attributed their defeats entirely to the bad equipment of their troops. Also, it was with regret that I realised that the best part of the supplies had been allotted to the troops who were not taking part in the counter-attack.

" Finally, the information I was able to obtain regarding the enemy was rather vague. In accordance with the strategical plan, I should have had facing me the Mozyrz Group. The composition and strength of this group had never been precisely ascertained by us. We knew that the 57th Division of Infantry came into this group, and in addition other detachments formed a sort of independent section. Up to the present, however, I had no reliable information. Their previous activities were liable to make one think that it was a very large group. Since the 4th July, they had attacked in two different directions, and at the very place where we were strongest, along the so-called Poléise, and more to the north along the bank of Bobruisk-Brzesc. Occasionally,

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during the previous month, I had read reports which spoke of important enemy troops attacking us, not without success, sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another. And yet, on the date 13th August there appeared to be no enemy forces facing me. There were, at the most, patrols, slightly more numerous perhaps towards Kock and Maciejowice. I own I took these for partisans sent across the country to requisition and plunder.

"Reports from Warsaw were reassuring; the enemy, according to all accounts, was preparing to attack, and was concentrating forces accordingly. Nor did the south send any alarming news; the impression I formed at Warsaw was confirmed. I had time in front of me, and I decided not to commence my attack before the morning of 17th August, when the attack on Warsaw would be already under way and the Soviet forces would be closely engaged by the main body of our Warsaw force. This would give me time to fuse my Divisions into one group, hoping that the 3rd Division of the Legion, delayed in its march towards the north, would arrive to take its place with the other Divisions.

"But on the following day the situation went wrong. Agonised telegrams arrived from Warsaw. The first Soviet attack had broken through our re-

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sistance ; Radzymin and its surroundings had been taken by assault. The telegrams described in an alarming fashion the general feeling in the capital. I experienced a certain surprise when I learned that the pressure brought to bear by Toukhatchevsky's troops increased in the direction of Plock, even at Wloclawek and Brodnica. The telegrams conveying this news spoke not only of cavalry, as I had expected, but of other arms. This was a puzzle I could not solve, because it was so entirely opposed to my previous conviction, namely, that Toukhatchevsky had concentrated all his forces against Warsaw. These alarming messages were intended to bring pressure on me to fly to the help of the capital or to force me to take the offensive at once, without waiting for the completion of my preparation. I therefore communicated with Warsaw to the effect that I would commence the attack at dawn on the 16th, instead of the 17th, as I had previously planned.

" I had given my troops, that is to say my four Divisions, as general objective the road Brzesc-Warsaw, which should be reached on the second day.

" On the 15th August, the news from Warsaw was more reassuring, but the fighting tended to prove that the pressure of the enemy centred more and more in the direction of Radzymin and to the north of

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Warsaw in the direction of Modlin. On the other hand, to the south, Boudienny's cavalry had started an offensive, and our Southern Army was forced under pressure to make a movement in the direction of Lwow.

"On the 16th, I let loose the attack—if one can call it an attack. Only the 21st Division of Infantry came into action, and engaged in a light and easy combat. Some days before, this Division had evacuated Kock, and had destroyed the bridge; now they had to ford the Wieprz before reoccupying Kock. The other Divisions made good progress, practically without encountering the enemy, save for a few skirmishes of no importance here and there with small parties who, as soon as they came in contact, dispersed and fled. It could hardly be called a real attack. I spent the whole day motoring principally to the 14th Division of Infantry on the left wing, collecting information and general impressions. I must say that by the evening all Divisions had covered thirty or more kilometres towards the north. The Mozyrz Group, however, was a mystery. Though part of the Soviet 57th Division of Infantry, no one had come in contact with it; this was quite contrary to my previous conclusions. Moreover, it was before this imaginary Apocalyptic beast that several of our Divisions had been retreating. It was like a dream.

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" There was a trap somewhere. My troops continued to advance, and still there was no enemy. I ordered the 2nd Division of the Legion to form a reserve to my advance troops, for I felt that we were menaced by mysteries and traps on all sides. It seemed certain that the Mozyrz Group, which had so far been victorious, must be somewhere, and the same reflections applied to the Sixteenth Army attacking Warsaw.

" The 17th August came, but brought no solution to these enigmas. I spent the whole day motoring, seeking for traces of the phantom enemy, and endeavouring to discover the traps which I feared.

" The next day, the 18th, I proceeded to Kolbiel, where I ascertained that the 14th Division had fought a battle in the night and were now advancing to Minsk, in accordance with my orders. On arrival at Minsk, I discovered that the Bolshevik Sixteenth Army had retreated in panic and disorder. The 14th Division reached Minsk and concentrated there, as did the 15th Regiment of Uhlans.

" From information received from our 14th Division, it was evident that their encounter with the most southern forces of the Soviet Sixteenth Army had resulted in only slight losses to the Polish forces and in the complete rout and panic of the Soviets. It was also ascertained that, in compliance with orders,

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one wing of the Warsaw garrison—the 15th Division —had attacked on the Warsaw-Minsk road, and had actually reached the vicinity of Deby-Wielkie. I then gave orders for the fusion of the 15th Division with our Fourth Army, and for them to march north and force the river Bug. As three of the enemy Divisions, the 8th, 10th and 17th, had been routed, it was evident that but small resistance would be met from the remaining Divisions, the 2nd and 7th.

" On the 18th of August I left for Warsaw with the object of giving orders for the final grouping of the troops. On arrival there, I found the general feeling to be very different from that which I had expected. Contrary to my hope that everyone would have been joyful at the turn of events, it was a source of disappointment and surprise to find that most of the people to whom I spoke did not consider our strategic position as favourable and as radically changed as I myself thought. There was in some cases a certain sense of relief that Warsaw itself was not so hardly pressed by the enemy, but much discontent and disquietude was apparent on account of enemy attacks on the towns of the lower Vistula, such as Plock, Wloclawek, etc., and of the progress of the Soviet troops in the direction of what was called the ' Danzig corridor.' "

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Pilsudski had a hard struggle to persuade his compatriots that they were in truth already victorious. They persisted in believing in the existence of danger from the Russian Right and in the menace of encirclement from the west. How was it possible that the tide of victory should have been turned so suddenly? Could it be believed that the enemy hosts, which had swept all before them for nearly two months, could have collapsed suddenly as if struck by the wand of a magician? They did not lend credence to the reality of their own success until, between 18th and 22nd August, the Polish Fourth Army succeeded in taking Sniadow. From this time on they realised that the Soviet Army was not only defeated, but that it was retreating in utter panic. On 22nd August, Polish troops took Lomza, and after it the bridge over the Narew. This made the position secure, and, soon after, following a short but severe battle, the Soviet Fourth Army was forced over the frontier of Eastern Prussia and was there disarmed.

Thus ended the critical phase of the historic Battle of Warsaw.

So far in this volume, the events have been described from the Polish side. The standpoint has been that

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of the menaced and beleaguered capital of Poland. It is interesting to compare this account with a remarkable narrative of the same events seen from the Russian side. The Commander of the Russian forces, M. Toukhatchevsky, delivered a series of lectures at the Military Academy in Moscow between the 7th and 10th February, 1923, entitled "The Advance beyond the Vistula." These conferences constitute an historical document of rare value. In no other campaign has the commander of the defeated side given an account of his proceedings with equal clarity and frankness. With a view to clarity and to adjustment to the preceding narrative I have omitted those passages which refer to the earlier fighting on the Dwina and the Beresina, confining myself to events bearing directly upon the attack on Warsaw. The first observation which suggests itself on a perusal of this remarkable narrative is the close concordance between the account given from the Russian side and that written from Warsaw. The Russian commander recognises the disastrous effect of the dispersal of his forces, notably the failure by the Fourth Army to co-operate on the right and by the South-west Army to co-operate on the left. He is probably right in attributing his defeat in large part to these two diversions of force. He also confirms what has been written regarding his failure to attack Warsaw frontally with a concentrated force. He attempts to justify his action on the ground that

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his army was not sufficiently strong or well equipped to risk all on a direct attack.

Apart from the reasons given above he was lured by the great prize he would have secured if he had succeeded in capturing the whole of the Polish Government by an encirclement of the capital. He would thus have destroyed any hope of effective resistance by Poland and would have cleared the road to the heart of Europe. The very title of his lectures, namely "The Advance beyond the Vistula," is an indication of the vast propagandist hopes which inspired Russian leaders. It is also probable that his preference for an indirect and encircling attack was inspired by the complete success which had attended this method throughout the Russian advance from the Dwina. In every case where the Poles held a strong position the Russians passed round it and undermined Polish morale by creating the impression that the position had been turned or enveloped. They were not unmindful of the Lenin maxim "that true strategy consists in deferring attack until the morale of the enemy has been so undermined that victory can be made both certain and complete." Had the Russians succeeded in carrying out the successful crossing of the Vistula either above or below Warsaw there can be little doubt that the effect on the morale of the town would have been such as gravely to compromise its successful defence.

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The messages sent from Warsaw on 13th and 14th August to Pilsudski and Sikorski after the first attack on Radzymin are definite proof that news of Russian forces on the left bank of the Vistula behind Warsaw would have created something like panic in the town. Psychologically Toukhatchevsky was probably right in his diagnosis. It is due in the main to the vigorous defence put up by Sikorski and the Fifth Army that this correct diagnosis did not lead to a Russian victory. Failure by the Russian right to drive Sikorski back was perhaps one of the greatest surprises of the whole campaign, for it was known to the Russian Commander that the Fifth Army was badly equipped, composed of discordant elements, and to a considerable degree demoralised. The stand made by them may be attributed to the military talents of their commander.

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GENERAL TOUKHATCHEVSKY'S NARRATIVE [1]

"Our brilliant successes and the continued retreat of the Polish Army had finally destroyed the latter's fighting capacity. We were no longer opposed by organised troops; the complete demoralisation, the absolute want of any confidence and the impossibility of success, had undermined the morale both of leaders and men. The Poles sometimes retired without reason; there were hundreds of deserters; no Provost-Marshal could restore order or discipline, and, above all, there was the antagonism between class and class. Workmen's centres had been strangled by the mobilisation, but the murmur of revolt continued among them.

"Assisted by French staff officers, supplied with arms and rations despatched from France, Poland—although defeated—applied herself feverishly to the work of restoration. Everything was pushed on with extreme rapidity; the trenches around Warsaw were reinforced; the line from Modlin to Warsaw

[1] Freely translated from the French version of General Toukhatchevsky's narrative as it appears in "L'Année 1920," by Joseph Pilsudski.

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was strengthened and troops were concentrated there from all parts. If, at the moment of our encounters on the Niemen and the Szczara, the balance of force was on our side, in Poland the numerical preponderance was profoundly modified. Our western front comprised at the highest estimate 40,000 rifles, whereas the Polish forces—according to information then available—amounted to 70,000 men ; the number in truth was greater.

"The Polish Command, understanding that the continuation of fighting in retreat could lead to no success, took a bold decision on 6th August, probably not without the participation of the French General Staff. This decision was to break contact with our pursuing forces, and to proceed to carry out a fresh grouping of the whole Polish front. The Polish commander realised that the decisive battle would be fought on the Vistula, and he concentrated his forces there. From Lwow, almost all the Polish units were recalled ; only Ukranian irregulars were left, together with a small force of infantry. This small body was entrusted with the duty of protecting the petroleum district ; all the rest were sent north by rail. The Polish Command took the risk of losing Galicia but hoped to win the main battle and thus save bourgeoise Poland.

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That was why the whole army concentrated on the Vistula.

"On our side, the following was the position. Our western forces were weakened and exhausted physically, but the morale was good and they did not fear the enemy. The latter, although two or three times as numerous as we were, could not resist our attack. The spirit of the offensive and of victory carried our troops forward, but, if one proceeds to a calm study of our strategical position, the impression is less favourable.

"Already at the commencement of the Polish campaign, the problem of combination between our western front and our south-western front had been taken into consideration. At that moment, the High Command considered that unification of the two forces would be premature, and that a combination could be wisely postponed until after we had passed the meridian of Brest-Litovsk. There is no doubt that the Polesian marshes constituted a real obstacle to any close co-operation between our western and south-western fronts, so the above decision was entirely logical. But, when we had proceeded farther west, the task of unifying the two forces became almost impracticable in view of the complete absence of means of communication. As a result the south-western and

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the western forces could not combine; the former devoted itself to a local objective, namely, the capture of the town of Lwow, the capital of Galicia. To achieve this, the south-western army advanced in a direction at right angles to the line of advance on the West. The situation was thus most unfavourable for the western front, for when they debouched into the plains of the Vistula, they were isolated in the presence of the whole Polish Army. Information received by our Staff led us to believe that all the Polish forces in the south-west had not been moved, but were still there; we had no information that the enemy had transferred troops from the south to the Vistula. The question became still more complicated in view of the fact that our south-western forces had to fight in two directions—towards Lwow and towards the Crimea, from which Wrangel was advancing. The continuous successes by the western forces left us no doubt as to final victory. We intended, therefore, after this was accomplished, to withdraw troops from the western and south-western fronts and despatch them towards the Crimea. This scheme was so much in our minds that we had some difficulty in not allowing troops to be detached before the main battle.

"Broadly viewed the strategic position was as

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follows : The Poles had carried through their bold logical redistribution ; they risked the loss of Galicia and concentrated all their force against our western front, which was the decisive point. Our troops at the supreme moment were scattered and faced different directions. The efforts of our Supreme Command to regroup our south-western forces against Lublin were unfortunately not successful.

" French and Polish authors are fond of comparing the Battle of the Vistula with the Battle of the Marne, but there is no resemblance. On the other hand, a perfectly true comparison does exist, namely that with the operations in 1914 in Eastern Prussia. There, Rennenkampf had assumed the task of taking Krolewiec and had advanced with all his army in a north-western direction, while Hindenburg retreated to the south-east towards the wing of General Samsonoff. This allowed Hindenburg to concentrate all his forces against half the Russian Army.

The Decisive Attack.

" In the meantime, our offensive operations were pursued without interruption. There was no time for hesitation or rest ; the final solution had to be achieved. Instructions were repeatedly given in this

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sense, and were finally endorsed on 12th August by instructions from the Commander-in-Chief to capture Warsaw as soon as possible.

"As concerns the western front, it was clear that the bulk of the enemy forces had been concentrated so as to oppose our attempt to cross the Vistula in the region Ciechanow–Modlin–Warsaw. We therefore sent no less than fourteen Divisions of Chasseurs and Cavalry in this direction. Taking into consideration the high spirits of our troops, we felt that we had the right to count on a certain victory on this flank.

"The vast outflanking movement carried through by our troops deserves attention. This movement was based on a powerful foundation, for if the enemy counter-attacked north of the Vistula, our northern force was concentrated there and could envelop the enemy. If, on the other hand, the White Polish troops felt themselves unable to beat us in the open field and retired behind the Vistula, we should be able to carry through the difficult operation of crossing the Vistula on a broad front.

"On the 6th August, the Polish Headquarters drew up the following plan of operations. The First Army, composed of four Divisions of Infantry, a Brigade of Cavalry and a large number of volunteers, was concentrated around the bridgehead at Warsaw.

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This consisted of 40,000 rifles and sabres. The Second Army, consisting of 16,000 rifles, defended the Vistula to the south of Warsaw as far as Deblin. The Fourth Army, composed of three Divisions of Infantry, was concentrated south-west of the Wieprz in order to attack our advancing columns in the flank. This concentration of the Fourth Army was covered by the Third Army composed of three Divisions of Infantry and a Brigade of Cavalry concentrated in the direction of Lublin. The Third and Fourth Armies consisted of 22,000 rifles.

"The arrangement of the White Polish forces, though entirely logical under the circumstances, was open to criticism, for, although it led to a complete Polish victory, I venture to think that the forces concentrated in the direction of Lublin were dangerously insufficient. Had it not been for the errors committed on our side, the Polish plans would not only have been incapable of leading to an actual Polish victory, but would probably have led to a Polish disaster. For, on our right, in the section of the line occupied by our Fourth, Fifteenth and Third Armies, we had twelve Divisions of Infantry and two Divisions of Cavalry against three and a half Divisions of Polish Infantry. We were thus in a position to

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deliver the enemy a crushing blow, uncovering his left wing and his line of communications.

"The following is a general review of the position: Our offensive had already lasted for five weeks, and during this time we had attempted in vain to discover the real centre of the enemy forces with a view to destroying it by a decisive attack. In every case, the Polish Army had invariably escaped and avoided decisive combat. It was only on the Vistula that the Poles, reinforced by new formations, finally decided to fight. We did not know where we should meet with the main resistance; would it be on the Vistula or beyond? What we did feel was that we should meet the bulk of the enemy forces somewhere, and that we should crush them in a final encounter, and it seemed to us that here was the enemy facilitating our task. His Fifth Army, the weakest both numerically and morally, was proceeding to attack our Fifteenth and Third Armies, while his uncovered wing was exposed to our Fourth Army, the freshest and best-trained of our forces. When he realised this, the Commander of our front could hardly restrain his delight. The Fifteenth and Third Soviet Armies received orders to reply to the enemy's attack by a vigorous counter-offensive and to throw the enemy back behind the Wkra. In the meantime, as regards the Fourth Army,

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the orders were to cover Thorn and to attack the enemy in the flank and rear.[1] The destruction of the Fifth Polish Army appeared certain, and in the event of this army being destroyed, the whole Polish scheme would come to grief. But the Poles had extraordinary luck. Our Fourth Army, under a new leader, had lost touch with General Headquarters, and did not comprehend the situation. Receiving no special orders, the Commander scattered his units in the sector Wloclawek-Plock. The Fifth Polish Army was thus saved, without suffering great losses, although it had on its flank and rear our powerful Fourth Army with its four Divisions of Chasseurs and its two Divisions of Cavalry. While the Polish Army was in a monstrous and almost untenable position, with its flank exposed, it was able to arrest the offensive of our Third and Fifteenth Armies, and to push them slowly towards the east.

"In the meantime, the Sixteenth Soviet Army cleared off the Polish units opposed to it and reached the various passages over the Vistula, but it was not able to hold its position, owing to various counter-attacks which resulted in combats ending with varying results.

"On the 13th August, the Twelfth Army finally came under the orders of the Commander of the

[1] See Map E.

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front. It would be about this time that this Army intercepted an order addressed to the Third Polish Army, from which it was clear that the Poles were preparing for an offensive against our left wing in the region of the Wieprz. It should be mentioned, however, that this order did not appear genuine to the Soviet General Staff, as, according to information in their possession, the units mentioned in the Polish telegram were not attacking northwards, but were continuing to operate in the south-western direction. Unfortunately, the telegram was genuine and authentic.

The Polish Counter-offensive.

" While our regroupment was going on, the Polish Army commenced the offensive and easily crushed the Mozyrz Group. Our Sixteenth Army began to feel the effects of the flank attack, which was all the more effective as our units were being reorganised, and, moreover, had lost touch with the High Command. This was a result of the General Staff being too far removed from the fighting line. The situation became still more critical for us, in that the cavalry army in the south-east continued to operate in the direction of Lwow instead of in the direction of Lublin.

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"Unfortunately, the Commandant of the Soviet front was not informed of the Polish offensive until 18th August by means of telephonic conversation with the Commander of the Sixteenth Army; the latter had only been informed of the situation on 17th August; the Mozyrz Group had made no report on events.

"The Commander of the Sixteenth Army, as soon as he realised the situation, declared that retreat was necessary, with a view to reorganising; he did not consider the Polish offensive as serious, and he was confident of his capacity to deal with it. In view, however, of subsequent information regarding the enemy's movements and the offensive on the Wieprz, we had to take a different view of the situation. The Commander of the Soviet front issued orders which altogether modified the situation of the attacking armies. On our left wing, the position was menacing; on our right wing, in consequence of the incomprehensible movements of the Fourth Army, we were totally unable to deal with the enemy's attacks; indeed, our position was extremely critical.

"The Commander of the front's orders said, in effect, that the Fourth Army should concentrate at the latest by 20th August in the region of Przasnysz-Makow, helping *en route* the Fifteenth Army. A

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despatch from the Commander of the Western Front specified that, if the help given to the Fifteenth Army gravely retarded the progress of the Fourth Army, the idea should be given up, the real aim being to concentrate in the region prescribed at the given date. The Fifteenth and Third Armies received the order to hold the enemy and to cover the concentration of the reserves of the Fourth Army. The Sixteenth Army was to retreat behind the Liviec, their left wing being covered by the Mozyrz Group. The Twelfth Army received the order to attack, with the aim of engaging the enemy who had debouched from the Wieprz ; the 21st Division of the Third Army and one Division of the Sixteenth Army were obliged to make a forced march in the region Drohiczyn-Janow, acting as reserve to the front.

"It was evident that the time lost had made us miss an opportunity of inflicting a disastrous blow upon the enemy forces, while we ourselves had fallen into a critical situation. It was imperative that we should retreat.

"Knowing the nature of the fighting and of the very widespread operations of the armies, the Commander of the front had no false illusions regarding a possibility of resistance or of the probable necessity

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of retreating as far as the Grodno-Brzesc line. Once there, we should be reinforced by 60,000 men who were already on the road from our reserve Battalions ; we should be able to rest there, reorganise and return to the offensive, but the essential was to get our armies out of the present situation in good condition. In this connection, the isolation of the Fourth Army was a cause for anxiety.

"But that was not the last of our misfortunes. Means of transport were poor, and the flighty movements of the Fourth Army in the corridor of Danzig were likely to prevent its Commander receiving the necessary orders in time. To crown all, the Commandant of the Fourth Army, isolated from the Etat Major of the front and the neighbouring armies, and thus having no idea of the general situation, remained optimistic, and considered the retreat inopportune. On the 19th August, having by chance got into communication with the Commander of the front, he expressed his views, but received categorical orders.

" That the Fourth Army, having lost so much time, was finally unable to carry out its prescribed mission on the fixed date, was quite comprehensible. This fact, in addition to the disorganisation of the Mozyrz Group and to the audacity of the enemy who had

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learnt of our situation, condemned our Fourth Army to a nearly certain defeat. One sole hope remained: that the enemy would pause to organise his forces and not push the offensive. This, however, he did not do. On the 20th August the enemy drove back the Sixteenth Army in disorder, attacked the flank of the Fifteenth and Third Armies, and, meeting with little resistance, occupied the line Przasnysz-Makow-Ostrow-Bielsk-Brzesc (*see* Map E). At that moment, our Fourth Polish Army had completed the first stage of its march on Przasnysz, and was in the region of Ciechanow. On the 22nd August, the enemy debouched along the line Ostrolenka-Lomza-Bialystok and the Fourth Army could only advance to a certain point, and no further. Our Fifteenth and Third Armies made every possible effort to stop the enemy attack and to leave clear for the Fourth Army the narrow passage situated between the Narew and the East Prussian frontier. But this task was impracticable. The Third and Fifteenth Armies, following unequal fights, in a very critical situation, lost a great number of their troops, and were unable to give help to the Fourth Army. The larger part of the Fourth Army was assembled on the East Prussian frontier, and was obliged to cross over into German territory. At this stage, the Poles, who

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had put all their energy into the attack, showed signs of not being able to continue their successful manœuvres. Our units, in a lamentable state, reached the line of Grodno, and there rejoined their reinforcements. The work of organisation then went on anew. The reinforcements were given their allotted places, and in two or three weeks the forces of the front were re-established—relatively re-established. The new troops had arrived unequipped, practically unshod, despite the rigours of the autumn. The morale of the troops, however, was good, and we considered that we had a good chance of regaining our position. The great question was: who would be ready to attack first? which of us would be in a position to take the offensive? Unhappily, the economic state of the Republic did not permit us to realise our aim. The Poles were the first to attack, and the continuation of our retreat was made inevitable. Our cavalry, which at long last had arrived in the vicinity of Lublin, was ordered by the Supreme Command to make a vehement attack at Zamosc, but it was too late.

"The essential conclusion to be drawn from our Campaign of 1920 is that the result was due, not to politics, but to strategy. Policy had given the Red Army a difficult task—a risky and audacious one,

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but that is no proof that it was badly conceived. All great achievements require audacity and decision. If a comparison is made between the revolution of October 1917 and our Socialist offensive in Poland, there is only one conclusion: in October the risks were far greater than the risks in Poland. The Red Army could have accomplished the mission assigned to it, but it did not accomplish it. The essential cause of our defeat was—insufficient technical preparation of troop commanders. Technical means were lacking because sufficient attention had not been paid to them; moreover, some of our leaders were insufficiently trained.

"At the moment of the decisive attack, the fact that our western and south-western armies were fighting almost at right angles to one another led to defeat just at the moment when the western force was engaged in the operations on the Vistula; moreover, lack of co-operation by our Fourth Army tore victory from our hands and led to our catastrophe.

"The working-classes of Eastern Europe, on hearing the news of the Soviet advance, were greatly stirred. The Nationalistic catchwords invented by the Polish bourgeoisie could not mask the real fact that a class war was being waged. That feeling stirred both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie

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of Europe, and a revolutionary thrill ran through the world. There is not the slightest doubt that, if we had succeeded in breaking the Polish Army of bourgeois and seigneurs, the revolution of the working-class in Poland would have been an accomplished fact. And the tempest would not have stopped at the Polish frontier. Like a furious torrent it would have swept over the whole of Eastern Europe. The Red Army will not forget this attempt to carry the revolution outside our frontiers, and if ever the European bourgeoisie braves us to new fights, the Red Army will crush it and spread revolution throughout Europe."

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CONCLUSION

Both Pilsudski and Toukhatchevsky deny, and even resent, any analogy between the Battle of the Marne and the Battle of Warsaw. It is indeed said that only two things really stir Pilsudski : the excitement of being shot at by some assassin, and the suggestion that his strategy in August 1920 was but a copy of French action on the Marne.

Notwithstanding energetic denials by the protagonists, it remains true that the two battles, on their respective widely different scales, are marked by a considerable degree of similarity. In both cases the advancing troops were driven forward so fast that they entered upon the final attack exhausted, without sufficient cohesion, disconnected from their supply columns and inadequately protected from flank attack along the whole line of communications. To adopt a racing parlance, they had been "ridden into the ground."

In Poland the failure of the attack may be attributed to the omission of the High Command to guard the flank. The Germans in 1914 provided a force for the purpose, but it was inadequate ; the Russians in 1920 provided no flank protection whatever, and suffered irretrievable disaster from their neglect.

In the Russian case, a political object might be

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alleged—the ambition, by surrounding Warsaw, to capture the Government and Diplomatic Corps, leading Toukhatchevsky to disregard the Polish Army which he considered a negligible quantity. The Germans were pursuing, not a political, but a strategic object, in accordance with the traditional principle inculcated by Von Moltke, viz. the destruction of the hostile field armies, leaving the enemy's capital for subsequent treatment.

In both cases, failure to concentrate on what was considered—perhaps wrongly—a minor objective led to overwhelming reverse.

In one point the battles differed. On 14th September, 1914, the Allies imagined that a victorious advance was only beginning; the day of great manœuvres was about to dawn when cavalry, infantry and artillery would operate in combination. No one foresaw that the Aisne would put a stop to the advance, and that the struggle was going to develop into trench warfare with all its horror and dreariness; no one foresaw that German troops for four long years would occupy some of the richest provinces of France and hold Belgium in a stifling grip. The Battle of Warsaw knew no Aisne; the advance of the Polish troops continued until the whole territory of Poland had been freed from the invader; until a new frontier had been won far superior to any recently in negotiation. Peace was signed, and Peace has been preserved ever since.

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Pilsudski is probably right in refusing to accept the views of those who state that he based his action on the examples of the French commanders on the Marne. He may fairly assert that his break of contact was more deliberate, that the risk he took not only in breaking contact but in diverting troops from the defence of Warsaw in order to prepare a surprise attack, is not based on anything that took place in 1914. He may therefore claim—on a more limited scale—a bolder initiative and a more clearly defined plan.

As regards Toukhatchevsky, it might be advanced in his defence that, by the very nature of the Government he served, his task was more political and less strictly military than that of the German forces in 1914; his action could therefore be defended on the ground that the prize for which he strove, though he missed it, was one of such paramount importance that it justified the taking of great risks. But such non-military considerations the God of Battle ignores.

In the early pages of this volume I gave reasons for considering the Battle of Warsaw and the campaign on the Vistula subjects worthy of impartial study. Although to some what I now say may appear idealistic and even Utopian, in view of the traditional ingrained prejudices which prevail, I would add a

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further argument to those already advanced. It is this : the desirability—the necessity even, if the gravest difficulties are to be avoided—of improved relations between Germany and Poland, and a cessation of that animosity and hatred which has embittered the two nations for so many centuries. The most pressing task of European diplomacy is to achieve some reconciliation on Germany's Eastern frontier. It is vital and urgent for German opinion to realise the indisputable truth that a stable Poland constitutes a bulwark against Communism, and may be considered an essential condition of European tranquillity.

Recent speeches made by influential leaders of the Communist Party in Moscow show that the present peace is intended by them to be merely transitory. They regard it as a breathing space ; a respite before the coming war. It is also certain that, if and when war comes, it will be " integral," an expression much in vogue with the Soviet, meaning that every weapon of destruction, legitimate or otherwise, will be employed, and that every device of insidious subornation will be resorted to. Bolshevism remains a relentless foe to civilisation.

It may be that Communist doctrine, repelled by force of arms in 1920, will achieve later the disruption it seeks. But should this come to pass, it will be due, less to the military strength of the Soviet, less to propaganda, however lavish and persistent, than

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to disunion among its adversaries and to the strange incapacity to deal effectively with the economic crisis, which is to-day so grave a reproach to the intelligence of the Western world.

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